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THE

BOOK OF SONGS

HENRICK HENKE

STRATHEIR









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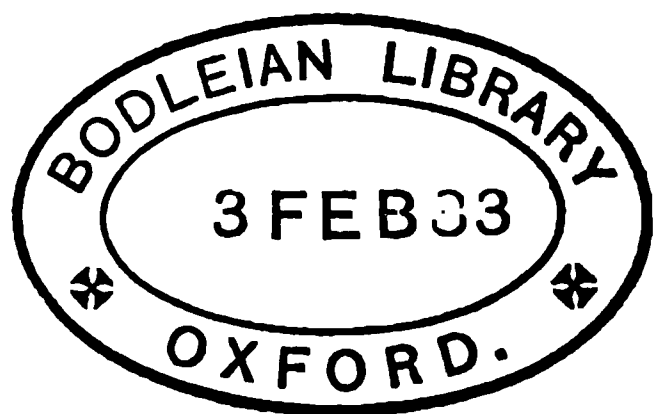
# THE BOOK OF SONGS,

BY HEINRICH HEINE.

*TRANSLATED FROM THE GERMAN*

BY

STRATHEIR.



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1882.

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# THE BOOK OF SONGS.

---

*Das ist der alte Märchenwald.*

Yon stands the fabled forest hoar,  
The lindens scent the air !  
The magic gleaming of the moon,  
Enthralls my spirit there.

I rambled on and as I went,  
On high a strain arose.  
It is the nightingale that sings,  
Of love and of love's woes.

She sings of love and of love's woes,  
Of laughter and of tears,  
Her blithe lament and, saddened joy,  
Wake dreams of vanished years.

I rambled on and as I went,  
I saw before me lie,  
On a wide plain a castle vast,  
With gables towering high.

Closed were its casements and o'er all,  
Had gloom and silence grown ;  
It seemed as though still Death did dwell,  
Within those ramparts lone.

Before its gate a Sphynx reclined,  
Twin-wrought of love and dread,  
A lion's shape and paws it bore,  
A woman's breast and head.

A woman fair ! the lustrous glance  
Betokened yearnings wild,  
The voiceless lips high arching rose,  
And mute submission smiled.

The nightingale so sweetly sang,  
I could refrain no more,  
And as the lovely face I kissed,  
I felt that all was o'er.

The marble form to life awoke,  
The stone in sighs outburst ;  
She drank my kisses' glowing warmth  
With craving and with thirst.

She drank my very breath away  
Till, passion-swept, she flung  
Her arms around my form where deep  
The lion talons clung.

Ravishing anguish and rapturous woe!  
Pain linked with endless bliss!  
Her talons wounded, while her mouth  
Entranced me with its kiss.

“O fair Sphynx!” sang the nightingale,  
“O Love! what doth it mean,  
That blended with the throes of death,  
Are all thy raptures seen?”

“O beauteous Sphynx! unriddle me  
This riddle’s mystic lore,  
Which now for many thousand years,  
In vain I’ve pondered o’er.”

---



Her eye was soft, her cheek was fair,  
A pictured saint with golden hair ;  
And gazing on the maid I trace  
A strange and yet familiar face.

The lovely maid, she plies away,  
And hums a wondrous roundelay ;  
“ Ripple, ripple, springlet bright,  
Wash me out the linen white.”

I went and near her as I drew,  
I whispered, “ Prythee, tell me true,  
For whom, sweet maid of beauty rare,  
Dost thou this vesture white prepare ? ”

“ Be ready soon,” she quickly saith,  
“ For thee I wash thy shroud of death ! ”  
And this no sooner had she said,  
Like foam away the vision fled.

Then next as if entranced I stood,  
Within a wild and gloomy wood ;  
The trees to heaven their summits tossed,  
Amazed I stood in wonder lost.

But hark ! what hollow echoes ring !  
Like distant axe-stroke’s measured swing ;  
With haste through bush and brake I made,  
And reached at length an open glade.

Within this sylvan circle weird,  
A giant oak its form upreared ;  
And lo ! my wondrous maiden fair,  
Hews with her axe the oak-tree there.

Stroke follows stroke and low she sings,  
A strain, while round her axe she swings,  
“ Iron bare, iron bright,  
Quick the oak-chest trim aright.”

I went, and near her as I drew,  
I whispered, “ Prythee, tell me true,  
Thou rare sweet little maiden mine,  
For whom dost trim the oaken shrine ? ”

“ The time is brief,” quick answered she,  
“ Thy coffin do I trim for thee ! ”  
And this no sooner had she said,  
Like foam away the vision fled.

So drear, so wide, there lay around  
But the bleak forest's lonely bound ;  
I knew not what befell, as there  
I shuddering stood in secret fear.

And now a-sudden caught my sight,  
As on I strode, a glimpse of white ;  
On sped I, till my step I stayed,  
For lo ! I saw the beauteous maid.

Her eye was soft, her cheek was fair,  
A pictured saint with golden hair ;  
And gazing on the maid I trace  
A strange and yet familiar face.

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And now a-sudden caught my sight,  
As on I strode, a glimpse of white ;  
On sped I, till my step I stayed,  
For lo ! I saw the beauteous maid.

The maiden white on open heath,  
With spade delved deep the earth beneath ;  
I scarce to look on her might dare,  
So spectral she, and yet so fair.

The beauteous maid she plies away,  
And hums a wondrous roundelay ;  
“ Shovel, shovel, keen and stout,  
Wide and deep the pit dig out ! ”

I went and near her as I drew,  
I whispered, “ Prythee, tell me true,  
Thou maiden sweet and wondrous fair,  
This grave, what meaning doth it bear ? ”

“ Be still ! ” then quickly answered she,  
“ A dank grave have I dug for thee.”  
And as the fair maid thus replied,  
The yawning sepulchre gaped wide.

As in the grave my glance I cast,  
An icy shudder through me passed ;  
And in the pit’s sepulchral night  
I headlong fell—and woke to light.

---

## III.

I dreamed one night I saw myself in pride  
Of sable suit and silken vest, and flowing  
Ruffles on hand as to a revel going,  
While stood my love, bright, happy by my side.  
I bent me low and said—"Are you a bride?  
Then, Madam, are my warmest wishes owing."  
But in my rising throat convulsive growing,  
The drawling, coldly courteous words near died.  
And bitter tears in sudden flow down beating,  
Fell from Love's eyes, and midst the tears breaking,  
Did soon the lovely vision vanish fleeting.  
O! most sweet eyes, Love's fairest stars, deceiving  
What though ye often are in hours of waking,  
Yet e'en in dreams must I be still believing.

---

## IV.

A droll wee mannikin I saw in dreaming,  
Who strutted upon stilts, each stride an ell,  
Snowy his linen, fine his coat as well,  
Within was all but coarse and sorry seeming,  
Within with worthlessness and squalor teeming,  
And yet without of preciousness did tell ;  
And long and loud his talk on courage fell,  
And played the hector to be valiant deeming.  
“ And know’st thou who that is ? Come here and see ! ”  
So spake the dream-god, who sly showed to me  
The vision’s flowing course a mirror’s frame in.  
The mannikin did near an altar press,  
My love stood by him, and they both said : “ Yes,”  
While shrieked a thousand laughing devils : “ Amen.”

---

. V.

What goads my maddened blood to ire?  
 What fans my heart to raging fire?  
 My blood doth boil and foams and fumes,  
 And frantic rage my heart consumes.

Surges my wild blood's foaming stream,  
 For I have dreamed an evil dream:  
 There came the gloomy son of night,  
 And whirled me hence in panting flight.

To a bright bower he carried me,  
 Where harp tones rose midst revelry,  
 And torch and lustre flashed and glowed;  
 Within the hall I boldly strode.

It was a merry marriage feast,  
 Sat round the board each jocund guest,  
 And as the bridal pair I spied,  
 O woe! it was my love was bride.

It was my love all winsome seen,  
 'The bridegroom wore a stranger's mien;  
 Behind the bride's high chair of state,  
 There silent did I stand and wait.



The music swelled,—unmoved I stayed,  
The joyous peal my heart down-weighed ;  
The bride, she glanced so bright and blest,  
And both her hands the bridegroom pressed.

The bridegroom filled the goblet high,  
And quaffed, and passed it gracefully  
Towards the bride, who smiled to thank,—  
O woe ! 'twas my red blood she drank.

A luscious apple took the bride,  
And placed it by the bridegroom's side ;  
He took his knife, cut deep a line,—  
O woe ! it was this heart of mine.

Fondly their glances met and long,  
Till round her bold his arms he flung,  
And kissed her cheek of rosy hue,  
O woe ! cold death did kiss me too.

Lay in my mouth my tongue as lead,  
And ne'er a word could I have said,  
When loud struck up a measure fair,  
And foremost danced the happy pair.

In death-like silence as I stood,  
The dancers whirled in merry mood ;—  
A whispered word the bridegroom speaks,  
The bride chid not—while flushed her cheeks.

---

VI.

I lay and slept, and softly slept,  
 All grief and woe allayed ;  
 When through my dream a vision swept,  
 The all-bewitching maid.

As snowy marble did she seem,  
 So strange and weird there ;  
 Swam in her eyes a pearl-like gleam,  
 Long rolled her wondrous hair.

Then moved she with light lissome grace,  
 The maid as marble pale ;  
 And round my heart twined sweet embrace,  
 The maid as marble pale.

How throbs and beats in glad unrest,  
 My heart with flame aglow !  
 Nor throbs nor beats her beauteous breast,  
 Which is as cold as snow.

“ My heart, it neither throbs nor beats,  
 But ice-cold doth it stay ;  
 Yet I have known Love’s joyous sweets,  
 And his resistless sway.

“ My lip and cheek ne’er ruddy glow,  
Streams through my heart no blood ;  
Yet shrink not fearful shuddering so,  
To thee I am sweet and good.”

And wilder clasped she me, till dread  
Did all my frame assail ;  
Then crowed the cock, and silent fled  
The maid as marble pale.

---

## Lieder.

---

### I.

I arise each morning crying,  
    “ Comes sweet love to-day ? ”  
Sink forlorn at even sighing,  
    “ Stays she still away ? ”

Through the night I sleepless ponder,  
    Wakeful o'er my pain ;  
Dreaming half in slumber wander,  
    Through the day again.

---

## II.

I turn hither, thither, with restless feet !  
Yet a few hours and I shall be seeing  
Herself, fairest maid of all fair maidens being ;  
Thou true heart, why dost thou so heavily beat ?

The Hours are ever a slothful crew !  
Lazily their footsteps dragging,  
Yawning on their way creep lagging ;—  
Speed you on, for a slothful crew !

A fierce unrest doth my spirit waste !  
But have the Hours ne'er known Love's desiring ;  
And in a cruel dark compact conspiring,  
Mockingly jest at a lover's haste.

---

III.

'Neath the trees a lone ramble taking,  
 My sorrows I brooded o'er;  
 When the olden dreams awaking,  
 Stole in my heart once more.

"This word, who taught ye to bear it,  
 Ye birds, in the breezy sky?  
 Be still! lest my heart should hear it,  
 And again with anguish sigh."

"A maiden passed and was singing,  
 And her soaring song we heard;  
 And we caught as it floated ringing  
 The beautiful golden word."

"No more with these tales deceive me,  
 Ye little birds wondrous sly;  
 Ye would of my sorrow bereave me,  
 But in none confide will I."

## IV.

Dear love, on my heart lay thy little hand so ;  
Ah ! hear'st how it knocks in the chamber below ?  
There lodges a carpenter crafty and sly,  
Who fashions a coffin wherein I must lie.

He knocks and he hammers by day and by night,  
And long since of sleep hath he robbed me outright.  
So then, master carpenter, quick work away,  
And thus let me slumber as soon as I may !

---

V.

Cradle fair of hopeless yearning,  
 Fair grave where my peace doth lie ;  
 Now from thee, fair city, turning,  
 Bid I thee a last good-bye.

Fare thee well, thou hallowed dwelling,  
 Which my love oft wandered o'er ;  
 Farewell, hallowed spot, still telling  
 Where I saw her first of yore.

Had I not beheld thee ever,  
 Thou my heart's fair thronéd queen !  
 It had then befallen never,  
 That I have so hapless been.

Ne'er thy heart to move I've striven,  
 Love in me no suppliant found ;  
 But that life in calm be given,  
 Where thy fragrance breathes around.

But me hence thy bidding urges,  
 Bitter words thy lips outpour ;  
 Frenzy through my senses surges,  
 And my heart is sad and sore.

With weak limbs that scarce can stay me,  
 Staff in hand the way I brave,  
 Till my weary head I lay me  
 In a cold and distant grave.



## VI.

Stay thee, stay thee, hasty boatman,  
Soon with thee to port I spur ;  
From two maidens I am parting,  
From Europa and from her.

Bloodstream, from my eyes, run welling,  
Blood, forth from my body flow ;  
That in my own burning life-blood,  
I may here inscribe my woe.

Ah, my love, is it now only,  
On my blood thou look'st with fear ?  
Thou hast seen me pale and bleeding,  
Stand before thee many a year !

Knowest thou how the wily serpent,  
As in ancient story taught,  
By an apple's gift in Eden,  
Our first parents' ruin wrought ?

'Tis the apple brings perdition !  
Through it Eve did bring us death,  
Eris, Troy's avenging fires,  
Both thou bringest, flames and death.

---

VII.

Hill and castle deep are glancing,  
     In the crystal-mirrored Rhine,  
 And my merry bark is dancing,  
     As the sunbeams round her shine.

Calm I watch in frolic breaking,  
     Golden waves in dimples fair ;  
 Feelings silently awaking,  
     That deep in my heart I bear.

With a friendly ardour gleaming,  
     Lures the stream's refulgence bright ;  
 But I know its glassy seeming,  
     Hides within but death and night.

Fair above, within capricious,  
     Stream, my love thou pictur'st oft !  
 Her kind welcome as delicious,  
     And her smile as calm and soft.

---

## VIII.

First my heart despairing o'er it,  
Seemed it more than I could bear;  
Yet—and yet—withal I bore it,—  
*How I bore it, ask me ne'er!*

---

## IX.

Roses and cypress and beaten gold,  
Would I might sweetly and tenderly fold,  
This book around, and there enshrine,  
As in a tomb, these lays of mine.

And there too laid, might Love repose,  
For o'er Love's grave Rest's flower blows;  
There blooms and is gathered, but ne'er for me,  
Till I sink in the grave, shall its blossoms be.

And here are the lays that madly of old,  
Like a lava torrent from Etna rolled,  
Flung raging forth from thoughts profound,  
While flew their dazzling sparks around!

But now as the dead all silently,  
And lifeless and cold and wan they lie.  
But in them shall wake the fire of yore,  
When the spirit of Love broods o'er them once more.

In my heart prophetic voices call,  
That o'er them Love's spirit in dew shall fall ;  
And this book yet thrill to the touch of thy hand,  
My own sweet love, in some far-off land.

Then from its spell shall my song be free,  
And the pale letters shall gaze on thee,  
Beseeching looks in thy sweet eyes throw,  
And plaintive breathe in love-whispers low.

---

## Romanzen.

---

### I.

All are with compassion smitten,  
    Who the pallid youth behold ;  
Whose distress and sorrow written,  
    Stand upon his visage told.

Sympathetic breezes wing him  
    Coolness for his burning brow ;  
Laughing comfort fain would bring him  
    Many a yielding maiden now.

From the town's tumultuous bustle,  
    Hastening to the wood he flies ;  
Merrily the leaves there rustle,  
    Joyous songs of birds arise.

Soon the song is hushed and over,  
    Tree and leaf faint whispering sigh,  
As the melancholy lover,  
    Slowly to the wood draws nigh.

---

## II.

With sad still tread through the mountain vale,  
There rode a horseman brave ;  
“ Ah ! do I haste to my true love’s arms,  
Or haste to the darksome grave ? ”  
The echo answer gave :  
“ The darksome grave.”

And onward still the horseman rides,  
And sighed from his weary breast ;  
“ So must I haste to the grave so soon,  
Still aye in the grave is rest ! ”  
The echo him addressed :  
“ In the grave is rest.”

A tear the horseman’s cheek adown,  
In heart-wrung anguish fell ;  
“ If the grave alone hath rest for me,  
For me in the grave ’tis well.”  
Dull rose the echoing knell :  
“ In the grave ’tis well ! ”

---

## III.

From the mountain summit springing,  
Stands the castle veiled in night;  
In the valley fiercely ringing,  
Gleaming swords are flashing bright.

Brothers twain in fight are raging,  
Grim in deadly strife they stand.  
Say, why thus their combat waging,  
War the brothers sword in hand?

Gráfin Laura's eyes have lighted,  
Thus the brother-strife arrayed;  
Both their maiden love have plighted  
To the fair and noble maid.

Of the twain for which prevailing,  
Doth her heart its love avow?  
Other judgment nought availing,  
Sword! leap forth! decide it, thou!

Fierce and wild the combat labours,  
Rings with blow on blow the fight.  
Have a heed! Ye doughty sabres!  
Evil ever prowls at night.

Woe ! O woe ! ye brothers cruel !  
Woe ! O woe ! thou bloody strand !  
Sink both champions in the duel,  
Each upon the other's brand.

In the past the years fade dimly,  
Death still humankind lays low ;  
Still from the hill summit grimly,  
The lone castle looks below.

Yet i' the vale when night doth lower,  
Strange still steps are heard again ;  
And when tolls the midnight hour,  
Combat there the brothers twain.

---



## IV.—1.

Hans and Grete dance around,  
And sing for very gladness.  
Peter mute, breathes ne'er a sound,  
And wan his face with sadness.

Hans and Grete are bridegroom and bride,  
Decked for a wedding gaily.  
Poor Peter bites his nails aside,  
In the smock he goes in daily.

Then to himself he faintly sighs,  
The pair despondent viewing :  
“Some mischief were I not too wise,  
To my life I'd fain be doing.”

---

## 2.

“ Within my breast doth sorrow prey,  
My heart asunder riving ;  
And whither I go, where’er I stay,  
Hence goads me onward driving.

“ It speeds me to my true love nigh,  
As though could Grete heal me ;  
But when I gaze into her eye,  
Still on impelled I feel me.

“ I ’ll hie me to the mountain’s crest,  
Where solitude shall woo me ;  
And there my tears as mute I rest,  
Shall silently bedew me.”

---

## 3.

The luckless Peter wanders by,  
    Slow, deadly pale and timidly ;  
The very people in the street  
    Whene'er they see him, stay their feet.

The maidens say with bated breath,  
    “ He seems as risen now from death.”  
Alas ! ye dear maidens—no,  
    He hath yet in the grave to go.

Of his dear treasure dispossessed,  
    The grave is his true place of rest,  
Where, lying peacefully, he may  
    Sleep on until the Judgment Day.

---

## V.

To France two grenadiers their way  
Were from Russian dungeons wending,  
And as o'er the German march passed they,  
Their heads hung sadly bending.

There, sorrowful tidings the twain did greet,  
That the might of France was shaken,  
Her countless legions foiled and beat,  
And the Kaiser, the Kaiser taken.

Then wept the grenadiers twain,  
The rueful tale at learning.  
Said one: "Ah me, how keen again  
My olden wounds are burning!"

The other spake: "The end hath come,  
I'd die with thee, ne'er doubt me,  
But wife and child would dree at home,  
A hapless fate without me."

"Nor wife, nor child of mine I heed  
When nobler longings waken;  
Let them go starve in hunger's need,—  
My Kaiser—my Kaiser taken!

“ Yet, brother, grant me one last prayer ;  
If here my days I number,  
With thee to France my body bear,  
In the soil of France to slumber.

“ When the Cross of Honour’s crimson band  
Thou on my breast hath bound me,  
Then place my musket in my hand  
And gird my sword around me.

“ Thus shall I lie, and list evermore,  
My grave as a sentinel keeping,  
Till I hear once again the cannons roar,  
And the neighing of squadrons sweeping.

“ Then over my grave my Kaiser shall ride  
Midst the clash of steel ascending ;  
Then armed shall I leap from the grave to his side,  
The Kaiser, the Kaiser defending ! ”

---

## VI.

Ho ! up my lad, and saddle quick,  
And mount thee on thy steed,  
And to King Duncan's castle fast,  
Through wood and meadow speed.

Into the stable slip and wait  
Till thee the groom doth see.  
Then ply him for me : " Which the bride  
Of Duncan's daughters be ? "

And says the groom :—" The nut-brown 'tis,"  
Then quick the tidings bear.  
But says the groom : " The blonde it is,"  
Such haste thou mayest spare.

Then get thee to the ropemaker,  
And buy a rope for me,  
Ride slowly, utter not a word,  
And bring it back with thee.

---

## VII.

“ I go not alone, my dainty love,  
Thou with me must hie thee  
To the olden horrorsome chamber dear,  
To the cold sad house of mourning drear,  
Where at the door my mother doth cower,  
And for her son’s return doth glour.”

“ Aroint thee from me, thou gloomy man !  
Who summoned thee hither ?  
Thy hand is ice, thine eyes flash light,  
Thy breath doth burn, thy cheek is white :  
My joyous life must blithely run  
Where roses breathe and beams the sun.”

“ Let the roses breathe, let the sunlight beam,  
My true love sweetest !  
Thy white floating veil wrap around thee nigher,  
And touch the light strings of the echoing lyre,  
And sing a wedding strain to me ;  
The night wind pipes the melody.”

---

## VIII.

“ Donna Clara ! Donna Clara !  
Through long years loved passionately !  
Thou hast willed my utter ruin,  
And hast willed it without pity.

“ Donna Clara ! Donna Clara !  
O 'tis sweet the boon of living !  
But below us all is horror  
In the death-cold grave and gloomy.

“ Donna Clara ! joy ! to-morrow  
Will Fernando at the altar,  
As his wedded bride salute thee ;  
Wilt thou bid me to the wedding ?”

“ Don Ramiro ! Don Ramiro !  
Bitterly thy words are piercing,  
Than the star's decree more bitter,  
Yonder at my wishes mocking.

“ Don Ramiro ! Don Ramiro !  
Banish this desponding sadness :  
In the world are maidens many,  
But God parteth us asunder.



“ Don Ramiro ! thou who bravely  
Hast so many Moors vanquished,  
Vanquish now thyself within thee,—  
To my wedding come to-morrow.”

“ Donna Clara ! Donna Clara !  
Yes, I swear it ; yes, come will I !  
Will dance with thee in the revel :  
Good night ! come will I to-morrow.”

“ Good night ! ” Down the window clattered.  
Sighing stood beneath Ramiro,  
As if turned to stone long stood he,  
And then vanished in the darkness.

When, at length, in long encounter,  
Night before the day retreated,  
Like a blooming flower garden  
Lay Toledo far extending.

Palaces and stately mansions  
Shimmer in the sun's effulgence,  
And the lofty domes of churches  
Sparkle proudly golden seeming.

Like a swarm of bees loud humming,  
Joyous peals of bells are ringing,  
Sweetly rise the hymnèd anthems  
From God's sanctuaries holy.

But behold ! behold ! where yonder,  
Yonder from the market chapel,  
In a crowded press and swaying,  
Streams the motley throng of people.

Glittering knights and stately ladies,  
Court retainers, gay-apparelled,  
And the clear-toned bells are ringing,  
And between resounds the organ.

But respectful space conceded,  
Slowly pace amid the people,  
The young wedded pair resplendent,  
Donna Clara, Don Fernando.

To the bridegroom's palace portal  
Surges on the throng of people ;  
Then begin the nuptial revels  
Stately and in olden fashion.

Tournaments and merry feasting  
Alternate mid loud rejoicing ;  
Joyous speed the flying hours  
Till what time the night doth lower.

And for dancing congregated,  
In the hall the marriage guests come ;  
In the radiance of the lights gleam  
Their gay, glittering apparel.

On an elevated dais,  
Bride and bridegroom are reclining,  
Donna Clara, Don Fernando,  
And they interchange sweet whispers.

While within the hall sway merry,  
The resplendent waves of people;  
And the drums are loud resounding,  
And the trumpets echo pealing.

“ Wherefore, then, O beauteous lady,  
Are directed thus thy glances  
To the hall’s recesses yonder? ”  
Thus exclaimed the knight, astonished.

“ See’st thou not, then, Don Fernando,  
Yonder form in sable mantle? ”  
And the knight smiled answer laughing,  
“ Nay! ’tis nothing but a shadow.”

But the shadow came advancing,  
• And it was a figure mantled,  
And Ramiro quick discerning,  
Clara greeted him with blushes.

But begun had now the dancing,  
Merrily the dancers whirl them  
In the waltz’s giddy mazes,  
And the floor doth shake and tremble.

“ Certes, gladly, Don Ramiro,  
Will I in the dancing join thee,  
But in night-like sable mantle  
Thou shouldst never here have entered.”

With transpiercing eyes and staring,  
Gazed Ramiro on the fair one ;  
Clasping her, thus hoarsely spake he,  
“ ’Twas thyself to come that bid me ! ”

And in the wild dance’s riot,  
Whirling mingle both the dancers ;  
And the drums are loud resounding,  
And the trumpets echo pealing.

“ Snow-white are thy cheeks in pallor ! ”  
Faltered Clara, inward shuddering.  
“ ’Twas thyself to come that bid me ! ”  
Rang Ramiro’s voice sepulchral.

And within the hall lights shimmer  
Through the crowded throng o’erflowing ;  
And the drums are loud resounding,  
And the trumpets echo pealing.

“ And thy hands their touch is ice cold ! ”  
Faltered Clara, in terror shrinking.  
“ ’Twas thyself to come that bid me ! ”  
And they whirl them in the revel.

“ Leave me ! leave me ! Don Ramiro !  
Corpse-like is the breath thou breathest ! ”  
Ring again the words sepulchral,  
“ ’Twas thyself to come that bid me ! ”

And the floor doth steam and swelter,  
Merrily sound bass and viol ;  
Like a giddy woof of magic  
All within the hall is whirling.

“ Leave me ! leave me ! Don Ramiro ! ”  
Ever mid the throng comes wailing.  
Don Ramiro answers ever,  
“ ’Twas thyself to come that bid me ! ”

“ In the name of God, begone, then ! ”  
Clara cried, with firmer accents,  
And the word was scarcely uttered  
Than had vanished Don Ramiro.

Clara, death in face, stands rigid,  
In cold tremor, whelmed in darkness ;  
And a swoon that radiant figure  
To its gloomy realm transported.

Yields at last the mist-like slumber,  
And at length her eyelids open ;  
But again would mute amazement,  
Seal her winsome eyes together.

Since anew the dance had opened,  
She had ne'er her seat relinquished,  
And she, aye, sits by the bridegroom,  
And the knight doth anxious question.

“ Say what 'tis thy cheek that blanches?  
Why doth seem thine eye so lightless? ”  
“ And Ramiro?——” faltered Clara,  
And her tongue a horror deadens.

But with earnest frown and lowering  
Is the bridegroom's brow now furrowed :  
“ Lady, ask not bloody tidings,  
Died this day, at noon, Ramiro.”

---

## IX.

The midnight hour drew nearer on ;  
In still repose lay Babylon.

But where the royal pile gleamed high,  
The monarch's train kept revelry.

Above, within the royal hall,  
Belshazar held high festival.

The pages sat in glittering line,  
And emptied the goblets of sparkling wine.

The goblets ring and the pages cheer,  
Which gladdened the monarch grim to hear.

The monarch's cheeks a flush o'erspread ;  
With wine his insolence was fed.

Till blindly spurred, his rage outburst,  
In blasphemous words and the Godhead cursed.

And he vaunted high and cursed aloud,  
Mid applauding shouts of the serving crowd.

The monarch called with glance of flame ;  
Hastening sped the page and came :

Vessels of gold on his head he bore,  
Torn from Jehovah's temple of yore.

With daring hand the king snatched up,  
Filled to the brim, a holy cup.

Deep to its dregs he rashly quaffed,  
And with foaming lips aloud outlaughed.

“Jehovah ! for ever I thee defy,—  
The monarch of Babylon am I !”

But scarce the fearful word was said,  
When the monarch's heart was struck with dread.

The echoing laughter was sudden stilled,  
The hall a death-like silence filled.

And lo ! and lo ! on the wall so white,  
A phantom hand arose in sight.

And wrote, and wrote, the white wall on,  
Letters of fire, wrote and was gone !

Aghast doth the monarch sit and quail,  
With loosened knees and deadly pale.

The attendants sat cold shuddering round,  
Sat silent all and breathed no sound.

The wise men came, but none could declare  
What the fiery script on the wall told there.

Belshazar the self-same night was slain  
By the hands of his own serving train.

---



## X.

In the lists of song engaging,  
    March the Minnesingers by :  
Strange the combat they are waging,  
    Strange the tilt of chivalry !

Phantasy, foam-white, and fuming,  
    Is the Minnesinger's steed,  
He his art as shield assuming,  
    And the word, his sword at need.

On draped balconies there place them,  
    Fair dames glancing blithely down,  
But the right one doth not grace them,  
    With the fitting laurel crown.

Other champions enter never,  
    Save unscathed, the listed ring ;  
But we Minnesingers ever  
    Do our death-wound with us bring.

And whose song his heart's-blood draining,  
    There with fullest flow doth bleed,  
He, the victor is, obtaining  
    From fair lips the brightest meed.

---

## XI.

In plaintive numbers sighing,  
I an olden lay recall,  
Of a knight love-wounded lying  
To his false love in thrall.

Faithless must he look on her,  
Though in his heart she reign,  
And hold as his dishonour  
His love that bleeds in vain.

In the lists what though he bear him,  
And the knights to joust defy ;  
“ For mortal strife prepare him,  
Who dares my love decry ! ”

Yet silent are all, and burning  
Is but his heart's unrest,  
And he his couched lance turning  
Must pierce his own sad breast.

---

## XII.

I leaned against the mast and watched,  
Each wave as on it bore me.  
Sweet fatherland ! adieu ! my bark  
Flies merrily before me.

Love's home I pass, the sunlight shafts,  
The window panes are laving ;  
I strain my longing eyes to catch  
The sign no hand is waving.

Ye tears, away ! mine eyes forsake,  
Lest dim their gaze be growing ;  
My aching heart, break not beneath  
Thine anguish overflowing !

---

## XIII.

Sir Ulrich rides through the greenwood chase,  
The leaves are merrily dancing.  
He sees a form of girlish grace  
Atween the branches glancing.

The stripling cried, " Ah ! well I know,  
This semblance bright and beaming,  
Thus lures in crowds, or silence so,  
To hover round me seeming.

" Her lips, their place twin rosebuds fill,  
Dainty and fresh I ween them ;  
Yet many a bitter word and ill  
Steals biting oft between them.

" Her mouth it can alone compare  
With bowers of fairest roses,  
And venomed snakes sly hissing there,  
Their leafy shade discloses.

" Each dimplet there a sweeter spell  
To sweetest cheeks hath given ;  
It is the pit wherein I fell  
By passionate longing driven.

“ And yon I see the tresses fair,  
From fairest head down shaken,  
And ’twas by this bewitching snare,  
Was I by the tempter taken.

“ And each twin eye of blue that seemed  
Like limpid waves to woo me,  
Which I the gates of heaven had deemed,  
Were gates of darkness to me.”

Herr Ulrich through the wood rides on,  
The leaves were weirdly swaying,  
Far sees he a second semblance wan,  
A saddened mien betraying.

“ Oh mother,” he cried, “ whose love for me  
Thy mother’s heart did quicken,  
Whose life with woe so bitterly  
My deeds and words have stricken !”

O I would fain those tear-dimmed eyne  
With my sorrow’s flame be drying !  
And those pale cheeks incarnadine,  
With my own heart’s blood dyeing !

Sir Ulrich still doth onward ride,  
O’er the wood is darkness wreathing,  
Strange voices rise on every side,  
And the evening winds are breathing.

The stripling seems to hear his words  
    Re-echoed round him lightly,  
Borne by the joyous forest birds  
    That chirp and carol brightly.

Sir Ulrich breathes a tender strain,  
    The song of hapless rueing,  
And when 'tis done, he chants again,  
    Its burden still renewing.

---

## XIV.

Ah still can I recall the siren,  
    What time on her my eyes first fell !  
How charmed her voice's cadence pealing,  
My heart its sweet still power feeling,  
While tears adown my cheek were stealing,  
    And what bechanced I could not tell.

A dream had o'er my spirit fallen :  
    'Twas though I were a child once more,  
All in the lamplight sitting by it,  
Within my mother's chamber quiet,  
Reading weird legends while with riot,  
    I' the night without the wind did roar.

To life the legends seem to waken,  
    The knights from out the grave rise on ;  
To Roncesvalles combat bending,  
Roland the paladin rides wending,  
With many a valiant lance attending,  
    And alas ! base Ganelon.

By him undone was Roland basely,  
    He swims in blood, scarce draws his breath ;  
And ere his horn, far echoes flinging,  
Floats to great Charles' ear faint ringing,  
Must the knight's spirit ebb up-winging,—  
    And ends with him my dream in death.

Then rose a peal of voices swelling,  
That woke me from my reverie ;  
The legend now had reached its ending,  
The people their applause were lending,  
And amidst their plaudits bending,  
The singer curtsied gracefully.

---



## XV.

Golden ducats mine, I pray ye,  
Whither have ye vanished, say ye?

Are ye with the golden fishes,  
That in brooks do gay and sprightly,  
In and out disport them lightly?

Are ye with the golden flowrets,  
That the meadows green adorning,  
Sparkle in the dewy morning?

Are ye with the golden songsters  
That imbathed in glory wander  
In the skies of azure yonder?

Are ye with the golden starlets  
That in radiant legions brightly  
Dimple in the heavens nightly?

Ah ! ye golden ducats never  
Swim ye in the brooklet's wave,  
Nor the green mead sparkling strew,  
Float not in the ethers blue,  
Nor the skies with dimples pave,—  
'Tis my creditors I ween,  
Clutch you fast their claws between.

---

## ROMANZEN.

### XVI.

“Hear’st thou not the distant pealing,  
As of bass and viol blending?  
There fair dames in dance are wheeling,  
In light, wingéd measures bending.”

“What, my friend, thy sense is blunting?  
Bass nor viol hear I pealing,  
’Tis but sows I hear are grunting,  
And the litter hear I squealing.”

“Hear’st the blast the horn is raising?  
Huntamen in the chase are glowing;  
Gentle lambkins see I grazing,  
Shepherds on their pipes are blowing.”

“Nay, my friend, what thou art hearing,  
Horn nor pipe the sound is waking:  
’Tis the swineherd I see nearing,  
Who his drove is homewards taking.”

“Hear’st thou not the distant singing,  
As in dulcet contestation?  
Angels with their plumes are winging  
To such strains, loud acclamation.”

“Nay, the strains, so sweetly striving,  
Are, friend, from no contest o’er them !  
Goose-herds as they sing, are driving  
Their young geese along before them.”

“Hear’st not how the bells are sending  
Forth a strange sweet peal and clear ?  
Pious folk devout are wending  
To the village minster near.”

“Nay, my friend, that tinkling wholly  
Are the cows and oxen making,  
Who to their dark sheds all slowly,  
With drooped heads their way are taking.”

“See’st thou not the kerchief flowing,  
See’st the signal soft advances ?  
There I see my love stand, showing  
Tearful sadness in her glances.”

“Friend, no signal I see such is,  
But the wood wife, Liza, yonder,  
Pale and haggard on her crutches  
Limps she to the field beyond her.”

O’er a dreamer’s queries all too,  
Laugh, my friend, if such thy pleasure !  
Wilt thou *that* illusion call too  
Which deep in my heart I treasure ?

---

## XVII.

A highroad vast is our earth where pace  
We men as voyagers on it ;  
On horseback and foot we hurry and race,  
Like runners and couriers upon it.

Each other we pass, we signal, we greet,  
From the coaches our handkerchiefs flying,  
And fain would we kiss and embrace as we meet,  
But the horses press onwards denying.

And scarce at one station alight we, when lo !  
Dear Prince Alexander, to start us,  
Already his horn, the postilion doth blow,  
With a blast that asunder doth part us.

---

## XVIII.

When spring with its sunlit skies doth break,  
Then joyously flowerets blossom and sprout;  
When the moon on her radiant course sets out,  
Then glide forth the starlets in her wake;  
When the bard two winsome eyes doth see,  
From his inmost soul his songs flow free :—  
But songs and stars and flowerets bright,  
And eyes and moonbeams and warm sunlight,  
Howe'er the gladsome pageant please,  
The world's not all made up of these.

---

## Sonnette.

---

To A. W. von Schlegel.

In hoop attired rich-wrought with flowered tracing,  
 With beauty-patches on the cheeks be-pasted,  
 With pointed shoes, where broidery shone gracing,  
 And towering curls, and wasp-like, taper-waisted,  
 Thus was the false muse dight what time she hasted  
 To take thee lovingly in her embracing,  
 Whilst thou didst aye elude her eager chasing,  
 Impelled to roam by secret impulse wasted.  
 There in an ancient solitude descrying  
 A castle, found'st thou, like fair marble lying  
 Therein a lovely maid, in charmed trance sunken;  
 Loosed was the spell, swift at thy summons breaking,  
 And Germany's true muse with smiles awaking,  
 Within thine arms, ecstatic, sank love-drunken.

---

To my Mother, B. Heine.

I.

My head right high to bear 'tis my endeavour,  
With sharp rough mood am I somewhat affected,  
And were a king's glance to my face directed,  
My eyes before him would I lower never.  
Yet, mother dear, I frankly say—however  
My haughty spirit swell with pride erected,—  
In thy loved presence sweet and blessed, corrected,  
A modest diffidence doth seize me ever.  
Is it thy spirit strangely me constraining,  
Thy lofty spirit, that to all attaining  
Leaps scintillant, the light of heaven gaining?  
And Memory wrings me with remorse, deep leaving  
The sting of many a deed, thy heart so grieving,  
The true heart round me its sweet love-spells weaving.

---

## II.

In a wild mood of yore I left thee, turning  
Throughout the ends of the wide earth to wander,  
To seek a love that I might meet with fonder,  
And clasp it with love's own ecstatic burning.  
Through every path I followed love with yearning,  
With out-stretched hands before each door-step  
yonder,  
I begged a dole of love that men do squander,—  
Yet met with but cold hate and laughter spurning.  
Still ever roamed I in love's quest, and ever  
I followed love, and yet did find love never,  
And home returned again, heart-sick and rueing.  
But thou didst come in welcome forth to meet me,  
And, O! within thy swimming eyes did greet me  
The sweet love I had been so long pursuing.

---



To H. C.

As doth my hasty glance thy book devour,  
There give me welcome many an endeared,  
Many a golden scene, that whilom cheered  
My boyhood's dream and childhood's happy hour.  
I see once more up to high heaven tower  
The sacred fane which simple faith upreared.  
I hear the bells and organ-tones that weird  
Love's sweet laments between impassioned shower.  
Well see I too around the cupola skipping  
The nimble elves that yonder with rash daring  
The fair festoons and traceries down are tearing.  
Yet though the oak of all its foliage stripping,  
We wreck its verdant loveliness, still o'er it  
Dawns a new spring that doth afresh restore it.

---

## Fresko-Sonette an Christian S.

---

I ne'er with dolts consort nor do them flatter,  
 Who golden are without, within but sand ;  
 Nor, though he give it, take the villain's hand,  
 Who doth in secret my good name bespatter.  
 I fawn not on the beauty frail that at her  
 Own shame shameless, doth unblushing stand ;  
 Nor yoke me to the car where the herd band  
 To draw their empty gods with jubilant clatter.  
 I know it well, the oak prostrate descending  
 Doth lie, while by the streamlet lightly bending,  
 The reed through wind and weather firm doth stay.  
 Yet to what end doth come such reed ? then say !  
 What fortune ? As a cane a coxcomb meeting,  
 Or serve as varlet's staff the clothes for beating.

---

## II.

Ho ! with a mask that I in guise may make me,  
Of some rough yokel that these knaves degraded,  
Who in resplendent motley masqueraded,  
For one of such as they may never take me.  
To use of vulgar speech and manner break me,  
I'll show myself in clownish guise paraded,  
Belie the tripping sparkling wit these jaded  
Blockheads affect to lisp. Thus I'll betake me  
To the masked revel where confusèd neighbour  
Teutonic kings, monks, knights that round me hover,  
Greeted by harlequin, yet me few discover.  
They with their wooden swords do me belabour.  
And here's the jest. Did I unmask, astounded  
Would the whole gallow's crew fall mute, confounded.

---

## III.

I laugh at the insipid fools that staring  
Gaze roundly at me with a goat's grimaces :  
I laugh, too, at the foxes that with faces  
Do witless yet malignant sniff me glaring.  
I laugh, too, at the learned apes that airing  
Their lore set up as critics in high places :  
I flout the knaves whom coward fear abases  
To threaten me, envenomed weapons bearing.  
But when all Fortune's pretty baubles, reft us  
By Fate's relentless hands, are crushed and under  
Our feet, in fragments overthrown, lie scattered,  
And when the heart is in the bosom shattered,  
Yea, shattered and transpierced and rent asunder,  
An honest peal of laughter still is left us.

---

## .IV.

My brain aye haunting is a legend rare,  
And a sweet song doth through the legend flow,  
And in the song doth live and float and blow  
A gentle little maiden wondrous fair.  
Within, a little heart the maid doth bear,  
But in the little heart no love doth glow ;  
For in its loveless, frosty nature show  
But haughtiness and pride disdainful there.  
Hear'st how the legend through my brain is ringing?  
And how the song resounds forlorn and wailing ?  
And how the maiden her light laugh doth waken ?  
I fear lest burst my head asunder springing—  
And ah ! the thought too terrible—lest failing,  
My reason from her ancient seat be shaken.

---

## V.

In the still dreamily-sad evening hour,  
Long-vanished melodies are round me flitting,  
Course down my cheeks the tears unintermitting,  
And olden heart-wounds bleed in crimson shower.  
And lo! as by a magic mirror's power,  
I see the image of my sweet love sitting  
All at her work, in bodice red close fitting,  
While stillness reigns around her blissful bower.  
Then from her seat quick springing doth she sever  
From her fair head the loveliest of tresses,  
And gives it to me. Fear my joy represses.  
Mephisto hath my joy undone for ever,  
For of the tress a strong chain doth he wind him,  
And drags me round thus many a year behind him.

---

## VI.

“A year ago it was, at our meeting,  
Thou did'st not kiss me as in welcome due.”  
So spake I, and love's mouth of rosiest hue,  
Upon my lips pressed kiss of sweetest greeting.  
A myrtle sprig she plucked, sweet smiles repeating,  
From myrtle-bush that by the window grew:  
“Take and this sprig in fresh earth plant anew  
And shade with glass.”—She spake and signed en-  
treating.

The planted sprig soon died. 'Twas long ago.  
Herself I have not seen this many a year,  
Yet doth the kiss within my memory glow.  
Urged lately from afar, I there did stray  
Where my love dwelt. Before the house stood near  
The live-long night, at morn I strode away.

---

## VII.

Beware, my friend, of fiend's grimaces dire,  
Yet worse are gentle smiling angel faces.  
One such did tempt me once with sweet embraces,  
But felt I her sharp claws as I drew nigh her.  
And old black cats, my friend, beware their ire,  
Yet worse are white young kittens in some cases.  
One such I treasured whilom for her graces,  
Yet was my heart much lacerated by her.  
O pretty minx! O rare sweet little maiden!  
How could that limpid eye of thine deceive me?  
How could that little paw a heart-wound leave me?  
O rare soft kitten paw with velvet laden!  
Would I might press thee to my lips all glowing,  
Though from my heart were e'en its life-blood flowing!

---



## VIII.

Thou oft hast seen me war with knaves designing,  
Spectacled poodles, cats with paint a glowing,  
Who would my very name destroy, and knowing  
They sought my ruin by their foul maligning.  
Thou sawest how pedants galled me and how  
    showing  
Their cap and bells fools compassed me combining,  
How round my heart were venomous serpents twin-  
    ing :  
Thou sawest my blood from thousand wounds out-  
    flowing.  
But thou didst stand unmoved like a tower,  
Thy brow a beacon when the storm did lower,  
And thy true heart a haven to me surely.  
Without that haven raged the tempest's riot,  
Few are the barks within that ride in quiet,  
But there once anchored we may sleep securely.

---

## IX.

O I would weep and yet I cannot weep,  
And I would fain soar boldly heavenward winging,  
And yet I cannot: to the base earth clinging,  
Where the foul hissing worm-brood round me creep.  
And I would fain nigh my own life's light keep,  
My sweet-love, o'er her a fond shelter flinging,  
My life in her blest fragrant presence bringing,  
Yet can I not—rent is my sad heart deep.  
Forth from my breaking heart I feel fast flowing  
My warm life-blood—I feel my forces failing,  
And all things darker are my eyes discerning.  
And trembling inwardly I stretch in yearning  
Towards that cloud-land where silent shadows sailing  
Their yielding arms in love are round me throwing.

---

## Lyrishes Intermezzo.

---

### Prologue.

There once was a knight, mute, worn with woe,  
With white wan cheeks a-wearied;  
He crept with faltering step and slow,  
In sombre musings buried.

So wooden and awkward and clumsy was he,  
That the flowers and maidens laughed to see  
As he tottering past them hurried.

Oft sat he at home in the darkest nook,  
Men's hateful presence mocking,  
Out-stretching his arms with yearning look,  
His lips in silence locking.

But as the midnight hour ran,  
A music strange and song began—  
At the door was heard a knocking.

Within his love comes gliding there,  
Robed like the sea-foam flying;  
She blushes and glows like a rose-bud fair,  
O'er her veil bright jewels vying,

Round her slender form doth her gold hair shower,  
Her eyes beam forth with strange sweet power,  
And they sink intertwined lying.

Love-dazed as her form in his clasp he takes,  
The wooden knight glows with fire,  
The pale face flushes, the dreamer awakes,  
The dullard's breast swells higher.  
But she banters him archly with mocking grace,  
And her gemmed white veil around his face  
Is drawn as a mantle by her.

The knight in a palace of crystal straight  
Doth a sudden magic render,  
And his dazzled eyes doth he wondering sate  
With its flashing light and splendour ;  
But the fairy clasps him close to her side,  
The knight is the bridegroom, the fairy the bride,  
The harp play her maidens tender.

They play and they sing so sweet a strain,  
Footing a measure gladly,  
That the knight can scarce his wits contain,  
And he clasps his sweet one madly.  
When lo ! on a sudden the lights are gone,  
And the knight sits at home again alone  
In his dark poet's chamber sadly.

---

## I.

In the fair month of May  
    When buds in leaf were breaking,  
Within my heart in gladness  
    Love leaped to life awaking.

In the fair month of May  
    When birds were all a trilling,  
With love's laments I wooed her  
    That all my soul were filling.

---

## II.

Forth from my tears are sprouting  
Of flowers a blooming throng,  
And all my sighs transfigured  
Are nightingales in song.

And if thou lov'st me, childie,  
The flowers for thee I'll bring,  
And her lay beneath thy window  
The nightingale shall sing.

---

## III.

The rose, the lily, the dove and the sun,  
All these of yore my love had won.  
I love them no more, for loved by me  
Is but one fair, pure, dainty she,  
Herself, the fount whence love doth run,  
Is rose and lily, dove and sun.

---

## IV.

Whene'er I gaze into thine eye,  
Away all pain and sorrow fly;  
But when I kiss thy mouth—ah! then  
Am I all bright and well again.

When on thy bosom I recline,  
Meseems as heavenly bliss were mine;  
But when thou whisperest "I love thee!"  
Must I alas! weep bitterly.

---

## V.

But late that lovely face so dear,  
Did in a dream to me appear,  
As meek and pure as angels show,  
But yet so pale, so blanched with woe!

Thy lips alone were red and bright,  
But Death too quickly kissed them **white**.  
The heavenly light no more did shine,  
From those calm modest eyes of thine.

---

## VI.

O lay thy cheek to mine while fall  
Our tears together flowing,  
And to thy heart press mine, that all  
Their flames may mingle glowing !

And when our streaming tears meet,  
Dissolved amid their fire,  
And when my strong arm clasps thee, sweet,  
Shall I with love expire !

---

## VII.

In the bell of the lily breathing  
Shall I pour my soul, while anew  
From its chaliced echoes shall wreathing  
Rise a lay of my own love true.

The music shall tremble and quiver  
As light as the tremulous kiss  
Which to mine did her lips once deliver  
In a rare sweet hour of bliss.

---



## VIII.

The lone stars ever steadfast  
Set in the lofty skies,  
Through ages long, are gazing  
On each other with love-sad eyes.

They speak a wondrous language,  
Rich and of sweetest tone,  
But none amongst the wisest,  
This tongue hath ever known.

But I have caught its accents  
And can forget them ne'er ;  
And for a grammar served me  
My own love's features fair.

---

IX.

On the wings of song swift flying,  
 Dear love, shall I waft thee where  
 By the plains of the Ganges lying,  
 I know a scene most fair.

There a blushing garden is sleeping  
 In the still moonlight clear,  
 And lotus blossoms are keeping  
 Watch for their sister dear.

The violets laugh in caressing,  
 And gaze on the starry spheres ;  
 The roses sweet tales confessing  
 Breathe soft in each other's ears.

In startled frolic are bounding  
 The antelopes gentle and shy,  
 And afar its waves resounding  
 The sacred stream rolls by.

There shall we wander, sinking  
 Beneath a palm-tree at rest,  
 Calm peace and love indrinking,  
 And dreaming dreams of the blest.

---

## X.

The lotus shrinks retiring  
Before the noonday light,  
And with her head all drooping  
Dreamily waits for the night.

The moon, her lover, wakes her  
With a shower of radiance pale,  
And gently her face of petals  
Shrouds in a silver veil.

She blooms and glows and shimmers  
And silently gazes above,  
Breathes fragrance while tremulous weeping  
With the pangs of a wounded love.

---

## XI.

In Rhine's fair river flowing  
Mirrored within its wave,  
Cologne's vast city glowing  
Its mighty fane doth lave.

In the dome a face sweet-beaming  
On golden vellum glows,  
Which o'er my life's waste streaming,  
A gladsome brightness throws.

Flowers wave and angels hover  
Around the Virgin fair,  
Whose eyes, lips, cheeks discover  
My love's own image there.

---

## XII.

And so thou lov'st not, lov'st not me !  
What recks so light a thing ?  
I 'll gaze into thy face and be  
As happy as a king.

Thou hatest, hatest me, and this  
Thy rosy mouth doth swear it !  
Yet hold it, child, for me to kiss  
And I 'll contrive to bear it.

---

## XIII.

O swear not, let thy kisses rain,  
I hold all women's oaths as vain !  
Thy word is sweet, but sweeter far  
The kisses stolen from thee are !  
These have I, while thy word but bare  
And empty vapour is, and air.

Yet swear still as thou list, my own,  
I trust thy simple word alone !  
Upon thy bosom I 'll recline  
And dream that happiness is mine.  
Believing, sweet, eternally,  
And even longer, thou 'lt love me.

---

## XIV.

Upon my darling's eyes of light  
The gayest lyrics I indite,  
Upon her little mouth of rose  
The finest terzets I compose ;  
Upon her cheeks that blushing glow,  
My noblest stanzas stately flow,  
And had my love a heart, then writ  
Should a sweet sonnet be on it.

---

## XV.

The world is dull and cannot see  
Each day to worse declining,  
It speaks, my pretty child, of thee,  
Thy character maligning.

The world is dull, it cannot see,  
Thy merit undiscerning,  
Nor knows how sweet thy kisses be  
And all their rapturous burning.

---

## XVI.

Thou to-day shalt tell me, dearest,  
Art thou not some pictured dream,  
Which when summer days are fairest  
From a poet's brain doth teem?

But no,—mouth so rosy ever,  
Eyes with magic glow elate,  
Child so sweet and lovely, never  
Can a poet's mind create.

Basilisks and vampires sable,  
Dragons and chimæras dire,  
Monsters of romantic fable,  
These may wake a poet's fire;

But thee and thy merry fancies,  
Features that all sweetness seem,  
Such demure yet faithless glances,  
Live not in a poet's dream.

---



## XVII.

Beams my love with beauty rarest,  
Like the Foam-born in her pride,  
Chosen she of all the fairest  
To become another's bride.

Heart of mine! to all resigning,  
Fret not o'er her broken troth,  
Bear it, bear it unrepining  
Whatsoe'er the sweet fool doth.

---

## XVIII.

I ne'er shall chide, tho' break my heart in twain,  
Love lost for ever! ne'er shall I complain.  
Though diamonds lend thee their refulgent light,  
No ray doth fall within thy bosom's night.

Of old I knew this—once I dreamt of thee,  
And all the night within thy breast did see,  
Beheld the serpent that doth gnaw thy heart,  
And saw, my love, how desolate thou art.

---

## XIX.

Yes ! desolate thou art, and yet I make  
    No murmur, love—we both must hapless be !  
Till Death our weary hearts together break,  
    My love, for ever desolate are we.

I see disdain that round thy mouth doth weave,  
    And see thine eyes that flash defiantly,  
And see the pride that doth thy bosom heave.  
    Yes, desolate thou art—even as I.

Quivers around thy mouth a woe unseen,  
    Thy lustrous eyes with hidden tears are wet,  
Thy bosom proud a secret woe doth screen,  
    My love, we both must aye be desolate.

---

## XX.

Is it then quite from thy memory riven,  
How long to my keeping thy heart had been given,  
That sweet little heart so false and so wee  
That nothing e'er sweeter or falser could be !

Forgotten, too, hast thou the love and the aching  
That crushed in its pressure my heart to breaking ?  
I know not if greater were love or its sting,  
I know but how cruelly both could wring.

---

## XXI.

And could the lowly flowers  
But know my heart's deep pain,  
Their dews would weep in showers  
To heal its wounds again.

The nightingales my sadness  
And faintness could they know,  
Their pealing notes of gladness  
Entrancingly would flow.

The stars in golden splendour,  
Could they my woe perceive,  
To whisper solace tender  
Their airy heights would leave.

But these know naught; my lonely  
Sorrow but one doth see,  
And she hath rent—she only—  
Hath rent my heart in me.

---

## XXII.

Why are all pale the roses seen,  
O say, my own love true?  
And why where grows the grass so green,  
Are mute the violets blue?

Why sings with such a plaintive note  
The sky-lark in the air?  
And why from out the balsams float  
Such death-like odours there?

Why on the mead doth shine the sun  
With cold and saddened gloom?  
And why is earth itself as wan  
And lonesome as the tomb?

And why do I grow faint and pine,  
Say, sweet, why may it be?  
O say, thou own heart's love of mine,  
Why thou forsakest me?

---

## XXIII.

To thee against me inveighing,  
    They many a tale did bear ;  
But what on my heart was weighing,  
    Ah ! this they told thee ne'er.

With meddlesome zeal they blamed me,  
    And shook their heads sadly as grieved,  
The very fiend they named me,  
    And thou, hast all believed.

But of all follies the saddest,  
    Ah, this have they never known ;  
The wantonest freak and the maddest  
    My heart bears in secret alone.

---

## XXIV.

The lindens blossomed, the nightingales sung,  
Its smiling rays did the bright sun dart ;  
You kissed me, and, round me your arms as you flung,  
You pressed me close to your beating heart.

The raven croaked hoarsely the leaves fast fell,  
The sun a glance of sad greeting sent ;  
And as coldly we bade each other farewell,  
Your courtliest curtsey you lowly bent.

---

## XXV.

A mutual tender impression we made,  
And yet agreed happily with one another,  
And oft at man and wife have we played,  
And yet without cuffing and beating each other.  
Together we sported with frolic and jest,  
And tenderly, too, have we kissed and caressed.  
At last hide and seek, when with infantine glee,  
In woods and green dells we together were playing,  
So well we contrived to conceal us that we  
To find ourselves since have been vainly essaying.

---

## XXVI.

And as I delayed and delayed so long,  
And wandered and dreamed strange lands among,  
The time on my love so heavily weighed  
That a wedding gown for herself she made,  
And tenderly clasped as a bridegroom admitted,  
Of all silly youngsters the most dull-witted.

My love so fair and soft is she,  
Her sweet form ever haunteth me,  
The violet eyes, the cheek of rose,  
Year in, year out, that blooms and glows,—  
That I from such a love could sever  
Was the silliest thing that did I ever.

---



## XXVII.

The purple violets of her eyes,  
Her cheeks where roses strew their dyes,  
Her hand that with the lily vies,  
These ever bloom, and 'tis alone  
The little heart that cold hath grown.

---

## XXVIII.

The world is so fair and the heavens so blue  
And with mild warm breath the breezes woo,  
And the flowerets wave which the bright meads strew  
And sparkle and gleam in the morning dew,  
And joyous are all where e'er I view—  
But I would fain to the grave be hieing  
To lay me where my dead love is lying.

---

## XXIX.

In the north a pine-tree lonely  
On a bleak height doth grow.  
It slumbers ; with white mantle,  
Enshroud it ice and snow.

It dreams of a palm-tree keeping,  
Afar in the morning land,  
Its mute lone watch and drooping  
On a cliff of a burning strand.

---

## XXX.

*(The Head speaks.)*

O might I but the footstool be  
On which my darling's feet do press,  
Though stamped she ne'er so hard on me,  
No murmur should my lips confess.

*(The Heart speaks.)*

O might I but the cushion be  
In which she thrusts her needles bright,  
Though pricked she ne'er so deep in me  
I should but in the wound delight.

*(The Song speaks.)*

And O, if I the paper were  
Which she doth round her tresses wreathe,  
I'd whisper furtively to her  
What doth within me live and breathe.

---

## XXXI.

Since my love away hath gone,  
Smiling have I all forsworn,  
Slender wits may jest in vain  
For I ne'er can smile again.

Now since lost for aye is she,  
Weeping, too, forsworn shall be ;  
Woe may rend my heart in twain,  
But I ne'er can weep again.

---

## XXXII.

From my deep sorrow springing  
The songlets sweet I waken,  
Which on rustling plumes outshaken,  
Hie to her bosom winging.

To my darling's heart quick hied they,  
But back returned lamenting,  
Lamenting yet unconsenting  
To tell what there espied they.

---

## XXXIII.

In Sunday garb cits are tripping  
Through forest and meadow sweet,  
Hallooing, like kidlings skipping,  
Fair Nature they blithely greet.

In wide-eyed wonder blinking,  
On scenes romantic gaze,  
And with long ears indrinking  
The sparrows' twittered lays.

But I my window veiling  
Drape it in sable array,  
While friendly ghosts rise trailing  
To pay me a visit by day.

My olden love comes keeping  
Tryst from the realms of the dead,  
And nestles close to me weeping  
Till my heart melts ravishéd.

---

## XXXIV.

Visions of days forgotten  
From the buried past rise slow,  
And tell how once beside thee  
I lived long long ago.

Through all the streets as dreamily  
By day I wandered by,  
All wondering gazed the people,  
So silent and sad was I.

By night with happier fortune  
The streets were empty found,  
And I and my shadow together  
In silence we roamed around.

With loudly echoing footstep  
Over the bridge we passed ;  
The moon from the clouds forth breaking  
A glance demurely cast.

I stood before thy dwelling,  
Aloft my glances flung,  
And gazed up at thy casement,  
And O ! my heart was wrung.

I know that thou hast watched me  
Oft from thy window-sill,  
And seen me in the moonlight  
Stand like a statue still.

---



XXXV.

A youth once loved a maiden  
Whom wayward choice had led  
To one whose troth was plighted  
Another bride to wed.

The slighted maiden marries  
The first whom Fate doth bear  
Within her way, and o'er it  
The youth is in despair.

It is an olden story  
That told seems new again,  
And whom the like befalleth,  
Then breaks his heart in twain.

---

XXXVI.

As I hear the melody waking  
 That sang my true love sweet,  
 'Tis as my heart were breaking,  
 So wildly doth it beat.

Sped by a desolate longing  
 The mountain woods I gain,  
 And there my full woes thronging,  
 Stream o'er in tears that rain.

---

## XXXVII.

I dreamed of a maid of royal race,  
Pale-cheeked and of tearful mien;  
We sat entwined in a sweet embrace  
Beneath the lindens green.

“I covet not thy father’s throne,  
Nor his sceptre tho’ gold it be,  
I covet not his diamond crown,  
But thee, love, only thee.”

“Nay, nay,” she said, “that may not be,  
I lie in the grave below,  
And at night alone I come to thee  
Because I love thee so.”

---

XXXVIII.

One still night, love, together  
     In a light skiff sailed we,  
 Naught heeding wind or weather,  
     Across the boundless sea.

The fairy isles soft sleeping,  
     Lay dim in the moon's pale glance,  
 And heavenly strains passed sweeping,  
     And the clouds swam by in dance.

The strains rose in sweeter wailing,  
     The dance wheeled from side to side ;  
 But we o'er the waves sped sailing  
     Adrift on the waters wide.

---

## XXXIX.

From the legends of bygone years,  
    There beckons a snow-white hand,  
And a music falls on the ears,  
    As from an enchanted land.

Where the giant flowers gaze yearning,  
    In the golden evening light,  
To each other tenderly turning,  
    With bridal faces bright.

Where the voiced trees are swaying  
    In choirs of festal song,  
And the echoing fountains playing  
    Leap as in dance along.

Where such strains seraphic pealing,  
    Ne'er on earthly senses roll,  
Till a wondrous rapture stealing,  
    Fills all the spell-bound soul !

And O ! would that thither in gladness,  
    My joyous heart might flee,  
And quit of all earthly sadness  
    Might there be blest and free !

Alas ! that land of the morning,  
    Tho' oft through my dreams it play,  
With the sunlit gleams of dawning  
    It fades into mist away.

---

## XL.

On a bright sunny morning in summer,  
Through the gardens' sweet mazes I wound,  
The flowers they whispered and murmured,  
But silent I wandered around.

They whispered and murmured—the flowers,  
And to eye me with pity began;  
“Nay, be not cross with our sister  
Thou pale disconsolate man!”

---

## XLI.

In robes of sable splendour,  
My love sheds radiant light,  
Like a legend sad and tender  
Breathed on a summer night.

“In a garden enchanted wander  
Two lovers silent and lone,  
Warble the nightingales yonder,  
Where the tremulous moonlight is strewn.

“The maid like a statue appearing  
Stands, while kneeleth the knight.  
The giant from wilderness nearing,  
The timorous maid takes flight.

“The knight in his blood sinks dying,  
The giant strides home”—ah me!  
When in my grave I am lying  
O'er will the legend be.

---



## XLII.

They plagued me beyond measure  
And drove me desperate,  
These with all their loving,  
And those with all their hate.

They did my bread empoison,  
My cup with venom sate,  
These with all their loving,  
And those with all their hate.

Yet she who o'er all others  
Hath plagued me, grieved and moved,  
She only ne'er did hate me,  
She only ne'er hath loved.

## XLIII.

Upon thy cheeks doth summer  
    Its rosy flush impart,  
While icy winter lieth  
    Within thy little heart.

But soon a change shall follow,  
    Thou own sweet love of mine !  
Thy cheeks shall harbour winter,  
    In thy heart the summer shine.

## XLIV.

When two from each other are parting,  
    And clasped is hand in hand,  
They fall to sighs and weeping,  
    As if they ne'er would end.

But we—we shed no tears,  
    From us no murmur fell,  
The sighs and tears followed  
    When we had said farewell !

---

## XLV.

They sat drinking tea while, pathetic,  
On love they discoursed much and oft,  
The men were serenely æsthetic,  
The dames full of sentiments soft.

“True love must be ever platonic,”  
The shrivelled court-counsellor cried.  
His dame gave a simper ironic,  
Then languidly “Ah!” she sighed.

The Canon, mouth open, reflected,  
“But love should ne’er violent grow,  
Lest the health should be thereby affected.”  
The Fräulein lisped softly “How so?”

The countess with pensive abstraction  
Said, “Love is a passionate crave!”  
And then with sweet grace in her action  
His cup to the baron she gave.

A place at the table vacated  
Was thine, dear, and thou wert not there,  
My sweet one, thou wouldst have dilated  
On thy love with so charming an air.

---

XLVI.

Empoisoned are my numbers,—  
How could it other be?  
For thou hast steeped in venom  
The happy life in me.

Empoisoned are my numbers,—  
How could it other be?  
My heart doth harbour serpents,  
Beloved mine—and thee.

---

## XLVII.

My coach is slowly winding  
The merry greenwood through,  
By smiling vales that witching  
The golden sunlight woo.

I sit and muse, and dreaming  
Think of my love, when lo !  
Three spectres passing greet me  
With heads that nodding go.

With strange grimace they caper,  
Mockingly and yet shy,  
And wind like mists together,  
And grin as they vanish by.

---

XLVIII.

I wept in slumber dreaming  
     In the grave that thou wert laid.  
 I woke, and flowing tears  
     Adown my cheeks slow strayed.

I wept in slumber dreaming  
     Thy faithlessness to me.  
 I woke, and fell to weeping  
     Again more bitterly.

I wept in slumber dreaming,  
     Visioned thy truth appears.  
 I woke, and still unceasing  
     Flowed on my happy tears.

---

## XLIX.

I see thee nightly, in my dream,  
A smiling welcome show me,  
And I with wail of weeping seem  
At thy dear feet to throw me.

Thou gazest with a sad appeal,  
Thy fair head softly shaking,  
And from thine eyes unbidden steal  
The tears like pearl-drops breaking.

Thou dost one soft word breathe alone,  
And a cypress wreath lay nigh me.  
I wake, and lo! the wreath is gone,  
And the word forgotten by me.

---

L.

Sigh the trees in the winds of autumn,  
 Cold and damp the night hath grown,  
 Close in my grey cloak mantled,  
 I ride through the wood alone.

And as I ride, before me  
 My wandering fancies roam,  
 And lightly soaring, bear me  
 Unto my darling's home.

The hounds bay, and the footmen  
 With torch-lights throng around;  
 As I mount the winding staircase  
 My clauking spurs resound.

Bright is the tapestried chamber  
 Where warmth and fragrance vie,  
 There my beloved awaits me,  
 And into her arms I fly.

The wind through the trees is sougning,  
 The oak to speak doth seem,  
 "What will thou, thou foolish horseman,  
 With this thy foolish dream?"



## LI.

A star adown is falling  
From out the glowing sky.  
Lo ! 'tis the star of love  
That I see shooting by.

Full many a leaf and flower  
Fall from the apple-trees,  
And with them in wild revel  
Disports the frolic breeze.

The swan on the lake is singing,  
And calm glides to and fro,  
And ever gently warbling  
Dips in the flood below.

Now hushed is all and darksome !  
Scattered is leaf and flower,  
The star hath burst and vanished,  
The song of the swan is o'er.

---

## LII.

The Dream-god bore me to a castle tall,  
With magic odours warm and lustres gleaming,  
And a bright surging wave of men poured all  
Adown its labyrinthine chambers streaming.  
The pallid crowd the portals seek, and fall  
To wailing with writhed hands in anguish seeming.  
Maidens and knights appear amid the throng,  
And with the press was I, too, thrust along.

But suddenly alone I stood, and lo !  
Aghast I mark the crowd now swift receding,  
And wander on alone, and haste and go  
Through galleries with mazy windings speeding.  
My foot as lead, awe in my heart and woe,  
Hopeless to gain the passage outward leading.  
At length I reach the outer portal, where  
I seek to pass. Great Heaven ! who standeth there ?

It was my love that at the door did stand,  
Lips wrung with pain, and care her brow was shading,  
And as I would have turned she waved her hand,  
I know not whether warning or upbraiding.  
Then from her eyes there flamed so sweet a brand,  
Transpiercingly my heart and brain invading.  
So stern, so strange her glance upon me broke,  
And yet so lovingly, that I awoke.

---

## LIII.

Night lay upon my eyelids,  
Upon my mouth lay lead,  
With heart and brain benumbéd,  
I slumbered with the dead.

How long I thus lay buried  
In trance, I scarce can tell,  
I woke—and hark ! a knocking  
Upon my grave there fell.

“ The endless day is breaking,  
Heinrich, will thou not rise ?  
The dead have risen, and dawning  
Is the bliss that never dies.”

“ I cannot rise, beloved,  
I can no longer see,  
For now, for very weeping  
Mine eyes have gone from me.”

“ Nay, I will kiss thee Heinrich,  
Kiss from thine eyes the night,  
And thou shalt see the angels,  
And heaven with glory bright.”

“I cannot rise, beloved,  
The blood doth ever flow,  
Where thou with word so bitter  
My heart didst pierce so.”

“My hand so lightly, Heinrich,  
I'll lay upon thy breast,  
That stayed shall be its bleeding,  
And all its pain at rest.”

“I cannot rise, beloved,  
My head bleeds ever, torn  
By the fatal shot I fired  
When thou from me wert borne.”

“Then with my tresses, Heinrich,  
I'll stay the wound's red rain,  
And backwards drive the blood-stream,  
And heal thy head again.”

So soft, so sweet, she pleaded,  
I could no more forbear,  
And fain I would have risen  
To meet my darling there.

Then burst my wounds, and surging  
With a wild rush, there broke  
From head and heart the blood-stream,  
And lo!—I straight awoke!

---

## LIV.

The olden songs and scornful,  
Dark dreams that bode despair,  
To-day must we inter them ;  
A mighty coffin bear.

Therein shall I lay many,  
Yet *what* I 'll say anon :  
The coffin must be huger  
Than Heidelberg's great tun.

And bear a funeral bier  
Of planks both thick and strong ;  
And they must aye be longer  
Than Mainz's bridge is long.

And bring twelve giants mightier  
Than Christopher, whose shrine  
Doth stand within the minster  
At Cologne by the Rhine.

The coffin forth shall they carry  
And sink 'neath ocean's wave ;  
Since for such mighty coffin  
Is meet but such a grave.

That it so vast and weighty  
Must be, O wist ye why?  
'Tis that my love and sorrows  
Therein entombed must lie.

---

## Die Heimkehr.

---

### I.

In my life by sorrow darkened  
Once a lovely vision rose ;  
Since that lovely vision faded,  
Night its gloom around me throws.

And as children in the gloaming,  
In their minds when terrors throng,  
Their unwelcome fears to banish  
Raise their voices loud in song.

I, too, but a child and wayward,  
Singing in the darkness go ;  
And my strain, though jarred its music,  
Frees me from my weight of woe.

---

## II.

A sadness its shadow is flinging  
    Around me I know not why ;  
My haunted memory ringing  
    With a lay of the days gone by.

The breeze is cool, it grows darkling,  
    And the Rhine doth noiseless run ;  
The mountain-summits are sparkling  
    In the rays of the evening sun.

High yonder in wondrous seeming,  
    Reclines a maiden fair,  
Her golden jewels are gleaming,  
    And she combs her golden hair.

A comb of gold is she plying  
    And warbles a wondrous song,  
That a thrilling melody sighing;  
    Floats like a spell along.

The boatman his bark while steering,  
    Is seized with a wild amaze ;  
He heeds not the rocks that are nearing,  
    Fixed high is his spell-bound gaze.



And soon by the waters swallowed,  
Will bark and boatman lie ;  
Such fatal charm weaves ever  
The song of the Lorelei.

---

## III.

My heart, my heart is weary,  
Yet merry May is bright;  
I stand, 'gainst a linden leaning  
On the olden bastion's height.

Beneath me in calm silence  
The moat's blue water flows;  
A boy from a boat is fishing,  
And whistles as he goes.

And far beyond all smiling,  
And like bright specks, are seen  
Villas and folk and gardens,  
Cows, woods, and meadows green.

The maids are bleaching linen,  
And dance on the grass around;  
The mill-wheel showers its diamonds,  
I can hear its distant sound.

Upon the old gray tower  
A sentry-box doth show;  
A scarlet-coated stripling  
There paces to and fro.

Now handles he his musket,  
That gleams in the sunlight red,  
Now he presents and shoulders—  
Would he might shoot me dead.

---

IV.

In the forest weeping I wander,  
The throssel sits perched on high,  
And hops and sings blithely yonder;  
“Why art thou sad, prythee, why?”

“Thy little sisters the swallows,  
Can tell thee, my child, if they will,  
For they nestle in slily-wrought hollows  
Beneath my love’s window-sill.”

---

## V.

The night is damp and stormy,  
And starless is the sky ;  
'Neath the rustling trees of the forest  
Silent I wander by.

Afar a faint light flickering  
From the hunter's lone cot gleams,  
Which yet in vain doth lure me,  
Within so drear it seems.

There the blind grandam sitteth,  
From her leathern settle ne'er stirred,  
Weird and still as a statue,  
And speaketh never a word.

Strides to and fro, loud cursing,  
The forester's red-headed son,  
Laughing with scorn and defiance,  
To the wall as he flings his gun.

The fair maid spins and is weeping,  
O'er the flax her tears rain,  
While at her feet low-whining,  
Her father's hound hath lain.

---

## VI.

As I once by chance on my travels  
Did my love's family find,  
Little sister and father and mother  
Received me with welcome kind.

After my health they inquired,  
And said as a positive case,  
I had not in any way altered,  
But was somewhat paler in face.

I asked about aunts and cousins,  
And many a wearisome soul,  
And after the little puppy  
And his bark with its soft low roll.

And after my love that had wedded,  
I asked in a casual way,  
And they smilingly said her condition  
Admitted of little delay.

Cordially joy I wished her,  
And murmured with tenderest air,  
That my most warm salutations  
A thousand times they should bear.

Then broke in the little sister,  
    “ The soft little puppy of mine  
Grew up so big and so savage,  
    He had to be drowned in the Rhine.”

The child my darling resembles,  
    Her own sweet smile hath caught,  
Her eyes the very self-same  
    That once my ruin wrought.

---

## VII.

We sat in the fisherman's cottage  
With glances seaward cast,  
And the cloud mists of evening  
Towards the sky rose fast.

The lamps within the light-house  
Flashed one by one alight,  
And in the distant offing  
A sail was still in sight.

We spoke of storm and shipwreck,  
Of sailors how they fared,  
And how 'twixt sky and ocean  
Now joy now peril shared.

We spoke of distant regions  
To south and north that were,  
And of the wondrous peoples,  
And wondrous customs there.

'Tis fragrant and bright by the Ganges,  
And giant trees uptower,  
And noble forms and silent  
Kneel to the lotus-flower.



In Lapland are squalid beings,  
Flat-skulled, wide-mouthed and small,  
Who huddle by the fire baking  
Their fish, and grunt and squall.

The maidens breathlessly listened  
Till all were hushed at last ;  
The sail was seen no longer,  
For the shades were deepening fast.

---

## VIII.

Thou lovely fisher-maiden,  
Paddle thy bark to land,  
Come hither, and nestle beside me,  
Caressingly, hand-in-hand.

On my heart thy fair head pillow,  
Nor thus affrighted be ;  
Dost thou not reckless trust thee  
Each day to the raging sea ?

My heart the sea resembles,  
Hath storm, and ebb and flow,  
And rarest pearls and many  
Sleep in its depths below.

---

## IX.

The moon aloft up-risen  
Silters the rippling sea ;  
My clasp doth my love imprison,  
Our hearts swell rapturously.

In the arms of the sweet child lying,  
I rest on the lonely strand ;  
“Dost list to the wind’s loud sighing ?  
Why throbs thy snowy hand ?”

“It is not the wind in its sighing,  
But sing the mermaids so,  
’Tis my sisters’ wail far dying,  
Whom the sea took long ago.”

---

## X.

The evening shades steal gliding,  
The clouds o'er the ocean lie,  
The whispering waves are chiding,  
And the white mists rise high.

The sea-nymph to shore with lightness  
Floats from the waves to my side,  
With budding charms whose whiteness  
Her needless veil would hide.

She clasped me and she pressed me  
Till wrung with pain I lay ;  
“ Too fiercely dost thou caress me,  
Thou lovely water-fay ! ”

“ Within my arms I fold thee,  
And clasp thee closer still,  
To warm my limbs I hold thee,  
The evening hour is chill.”

“ The moon from the dun clouds beaming,  
Glances with paler ray ;  
And thine eye is sadder and streaming,  
Thou lovely water-fay ! ”

“ It saddens not nor is streaming,  
    Though it seemeth sad and to swim,  
As I rose, o’er the waters gleaming,  
    A drop did my eyelids dim.”

“ The sea-mews shriek plaintive greeting,  
    The sea roars and bursts in spray ;—  
And thy heart is wildly beating,  
    Thou lovely water-fay ! ”

“ My heart is wildly beating,  
    Ne’er wilder its pulses ran,  
With speechless love entreating  
    But thine, sweet child of man.”

---

## XI.

When I before thy dwelling  
At break of day go by,  
Gladly thy face, sweet little one,  
At the window I espy.

With thy dark eyes of hazel  
Dost thou me wondering scan :  
“ Who art thou, and what ails thee,  
Thou strange and woe-worn man ? ”

“ I am a German poet,  
Famed in the German land,  
And when men name the proudest  
Doth mine among them stand.

“ What aileth me, my little one,  
Ails many in the German land.  
Name men the darkest sorrows,  
Doth mine among them stand.

---

## XII.

The broad expanse of ocean shone  
As evening's light was closing,  
We sat in the fisherman's cottage lone,  
Still and alone reposing.

The clouds soared high, the waters swelled,  
To and fro the gulls were skimming,  
And rising tears that ceaseless welled  
Thy love-lit eyes were dimming.

Upon thy hand I saw them fall,  
And on my knee low sinking,  
From thy white hand the tears all  
I caught with rapture drinking.

My body since that hour doth fade,  
Desire my soul is killing ;  
In me the tears of the hapless maid  
A lingering death distilling.

---

## XIII.

Upon the far horizon  
    Gleams, like a wreathed cloud,  
The many-towered city  
    In evening's twilight shroud.

A humid gust is ruffling  
    The waters' pathway dark,  
And in sad time is rowing  
    The boatman in my bark.

O'er earth his radiant splendours  
    The risen sun doth pour,  
And the spot shows where from me  
    My love, for aye, they bore.

---



## XIV.

All hail to thee, thou mighty  
Mysterious city fair,  
That, lapped within thy precincts,  
My darling once did bear !

O say, ye gates and towers,  
Where may my darling be ?  
To ye did I confide her,  
Ye her surety are for me.

Guiltless are aye the towers,  
For they could not quit their place,  
As my love with coffers and caskets  
Fled from the town apace.

But 'twas the gates that let slip  
My darling through and were still ;  
For a gate, like a fool, is willing  
When a fool of a woman will.

---

## XV.

Still is the night, no sounds the streets waken,  
And here stands the house that my treasure bore ;  
Long hath she now the city forsaken,  
But in the same spot is the house as of yore.

There stands a man who upward is gazing  
And wringing his hands with o'erpowering woe ;  
I start, for my eyes to his features on raising—  
Lo ! doth the moon but my own figure show.

Thou counterfeit pale, my semblance wearing !  
Why ap'st thou the anguish of love that I,  
In this same spot, long suffered despairing,  
Full many a night in days gone by ?

---

## XVI.

How canst thou sleep so calmly,  
And know that I live still?  
For my past wrath returning,  
I burst my bonds at will.

Knowest thou the olden story,  
How a dead youth of yore,  
Unto his grave at midnight  
His own beloved bore?

Believe me, thou wondrous beauty,  
Child sweet beyond compare,  
I live and am more potent  
Than all the dead that were!

---

## XVII.

In her chamber the maiden is sleeping,  
Peers the moon in with tremulous glance,  
While without song and music are ringing  
In the melodies soft of a dance.

“ I must up and look from my window,  
Who breaketh my rest below.”  
There standeth a skeleton weird,  
That fiddles and sings to its bow.

“ A dance to me once thou didst promise,  
And to break thy word did'st dare;  
'Tis a revel to-night in the churchyard,  
Come with me and dance we there.”

The maiden was seized with terror,  
It charmed her forth from her door;  
The skeleton sings and she follows,  
As it fiddles and strides before.

It fiddles and leaps and capers,  
And rattles its bones with delight,  
And its skull goes nidding and nodding,  
All weird in the pale moonlight.

---

## XVIII.

Buried in dreamy musing,  
I gazed on her image fair,  
And the sweet face seemed newly  
In life to waken there.

Her parted lips were wreathing  
Her own bewitching smile,  
And beamed through tears of sadness  
The eyes that know not guile.

Then, too, the falling tears  
Adown my cheeks did rain,—  
Ah ! dare I think that never  
We two can meet again !

---

## XIX.

I dreamed the moon did sadly shine,  
The stars beamed sadly o'er me,  
As thither where dwells sweet love of mine,  
Many hundred miles they bore me.

And now on the steps of her home I rest,  
My kisses the marble cover,  
Which oft her dainty foot hath pressed  
And her garment's hem swept over.

The night was long, the night was chill,  
And cold the marble seeming :  
A white form bent from the casement-sill  
Beneath the moonlight gleaming.

---

## XX.

What will this lonely tear  
That doth my glances chill?  
From olden days it lingers  
Upon my eye-lids still.

And many a shining sister  
It had, now dimmed from sight,  
With my past joys and sorrows,  
Dissolved in storm and night.

And mist-like, too, have faded  
Those azure starlets twin,  
Whose laughter wove those sorrows  
And joys my heart within.

Alas ! my very love too  
Like idle breath hath passed !  
Thou time-worn lonely tear,  
Now melt thou too, the last !

---

## XXI.

The pale autumnal moonbow  
Peeps from the clouds, half-shown  
On the quiet parsonage standing  
Within the churchyard lone.

The mother reads her Bible,  
The son in the light doth gaze,  
Drowsily stretches the elder,  
While the younger daughter says :

“ Ah me ! the days do o’er me  
Pass by so wearily !  
It is at a burial only  
That there is ought to see.”

The mother says ’twixt her reading,  
“ Thou errest—have died but four,  
Since was thy father buried  
By yonder churchyard door.”

Then yawned the eldest daughter:  
“ Here starving shall I ne’er dwell,  
I ’ll haste to the Count in the morning,  
He is rich and he loves me well.”



The son burst out in laughter ;  
    “ At the Star drink huntsmen three,  
They win bright gold and will teach me  
    Their secret willingly.”

In his lean face the Bible  
    Dashes the mother stern :  
“ So wilt thou, accursed of heaven,  
    Into a highwayman turn ! ”

They hear at the casement a knocking  
    And behold a beckoning hand ;  
Without stands the dead father  
    In his black gown and band.

---

XXII.

'Tis boisterous weather raging,  
It rains and storms and snows ;  
I sit at the window gazing  
Without as it darksome grows.

There a lonely light is shimmering  
That tremulous moves and slow ;  
A dame with a lantern feebly  
Across the street doth go.

Perchance 'tis eggs and flour  
And butter she goeth to buy ;  
A cake for her winsome daughter  
She thinketh to make, trow I.

While she in her settle sleepily  
Lies watching the candle's flare ;  
Around her sweet face falling  
Her braids of golden hair.

---

## XXIII.

Men think that I am pining,  
To love's keen pangs a prey,  
And now must I believe it  
As readily as they.

Thou soft-eyed little maiden,  
How oft do I declare  
That the deep love I bear thee  
My very heart doth wear.

Yet 'tis in my lone chamber  
That thus I speak—for I,  
Alas ! am ever silent  
When thou art standing by.

For then the wicked angels  
Draw nigh my lips to close ;  
And ah ! through wicked angels  
My life this anguish knows.

---

XXIV.

Oh ! might I once a kiss bestow  
    Upon that lily finger fair,  
I'd press it to my heart while flow  
    My melting tears in silence there !

Thy liquid eyes of violet hover  
    Ever round me night and day,  
And it plagues me to discover  
    What those sweet blue riddles say !

---

## XXV.

Hath she never once alluded  
To thy love-distracted seeming ?  
Couldst thou in her eyes discover  
Ne'er a love requited beaming ?

Through her eyes couldst thou then never  
To her very soul get at her ?  
And thou art, forsooth, no donkey,  
Dear friend, in such a matter.

---

**XXVI.**

**They loved each other, but neither  
To the other would love betray ;  
Coldness spoke in their glances  
While dying for love were they.**

**They parted at last, and each other  
Saw but in dreams now and then ;  
'Twas long, long ago they had died, yet  
Scarcely themselves knew when.**

---

## XXVII.

Man, deride not thou the devil,  
Life's short course will soon be run,  
And perdition everlasting  
Is no idle fable spun.

Man, pay all the debts thou owest,  
Long the course of life must run,  
And thou must still often borrow,  
As till now thou oft hast done.

---

## XXVIII.

Three holy kings there came from the East,  
And asked, by each hamlet hieing ;  
“ Dear lads and maids, to Bethlehem  
The road where find we lying ? ”

The young and the old they knew it not,  
And the kings still onward faring,  
Followed a golden star that seemed  
A joyous radiance wearing.

O'er Joseph's cave the star hung stayed,  
And they passed within, low-bending,  
With the low of the ox and the Child's sweet wail  
Their kingly anthems blending.

---



## XXIX.

My child, when we were children,  
Two tiny children gay ;  
We crept in the little hen-roost  
And hid beneath the hay.

And like the cocks loud crowed we,  
As the people passed by the road—  
Cock-a-doodle-doo ! and thought they  
It was the cocks that crowed.

The bins that lay in the courtyard  
Did we with hangings line,  
And dwelt therein together  
And fashioned a mansion fine.

Our neighbour's ancient tabby  
Full oft a visit made ;  
We curtsied, bowed, and many  
A compliment we paid.

About her health we asked her  
In grave and friendly chat ;  
We 've said the same since often  
To many an ancient cat.

And oft we sat conversing  
In old folks' sober way,  
Complaining how much better  
Things were in our day :

How love and truth and faith were  
Effaced from out the earth,  
How coffee was so dear,  
Of money how such a dearth !—

Past are the games of childhood,  
And so pass all in sooth,—  
Money, the world, and the ages  
And faith and love and truth.

---

## XXX.

My heart is sad with yearning riven,  
As I the olden time recall;  
The world was then so sweet to live in,  
And dwelt in peace the people all.

To pressing want we now must school us,  
And all doth such confusion show,  
That Providence seems scarce to rule us,  
And dead is Lucifer below.

And all so gloomy is around us,  
So stern and cold and crossed withal;  
Were not a scrap of love just left us  
We 'd have no resting-place at all.

---

## XXXI.

As the shimmering moon comes breaking  
Through the murky cloud-strewn floor,  
So from joyless days, around me  
Doth its light a vision pour.

On the deck all seated, sailed we  
Down the Rhine in gallant show,  
And its grass-green banks of summer  
In the evening sun did glow.

Mused I at the feet reclining  
Of a fair and winsome dame ;  
O'er her pale and lovely features  
Played the red sun's golden flame.

Lutes were tinkling, youths were singing,  
O ! enchanting time of mirth !  
When the very heavens seemed bluer  
And the soul too wide for earth.

Fairy-like before me flitted  
Hill, wood, glade and hamlet by ;  
And all, all I saw reflected  
In the light of beauty's eye.

---

## XXXII.

In a dream I saw my loved one,  
A wan and grief-worn wife,  
And faded all and fallen  
Was that once blooming life.

On her arm one babe she carried,  
By the hand another bore,  
And signs of want and sorrow,  
Gait, look, and garment wore.

By the market-place she met me,  
As she moved with feeble tread,  
And gazed at me, while calmly  
Yet touched, to her I said :

“Unto my home come with me,  
For thou art worn and pale,  
And through my toil and labour  
Nor meat nor drink shall fail.

“And I will tend and cherish  
Thy babes that with thee go,  
And above all thy dear self,  
Thou hapless child of woe !

**And ne'er my lips shall utter  
That to thee my love I gave,  
And when thou diest my tears  
Shall kiss thy silent grave.**

---

## XXXIII.

Dear friend, what boots it vainly  
The old strain to harp for ever?  
Wilt thou aye to brood insanely  
On the old love-eggs endeavour?

'Tis a cluck for ever uttering!  
From the shells the chickens troop them,  
And while peeping all and fluttering,  
Dost thou in a booklet coop them.

---

## XXXIV.

Be thou only not impatient  
    When old notes of anguish waking,  
Often still with tones melodious,  
    Through my newest songs come breaking.

Stay ! for when this far faint echo  
    Of my sorrows fadeeth ending,  
A new spring of love shall blossom,  
    From the healed heart ascending.

---



## XXXV.

'Tis time that I should wiser be,  
    Aside all folly laying ;  
Too long with thee in comedy  
    Have I a part been playing.

A tableau gay did the scenes unfold,  
    In high romantic fashion,  
My knightly mantle flashed with gold,  
    High thoughts did my soul impassion.

Yet now as I more soberly  
    End all this farce distracting,  
I feel as wretched as though I  
    Still comedy were acting.

Ah me ! to all I felt, in jest  
    My thoughtless speech turned traitor :  
I played with death within my breast,  
    The dying gladiator.

---

XXXVI.

Heart of mine ! O grieve no more !  
Bear the burden Fate hath left thee,  
And of what the winter reft thee  
Spring again shall all restore !

And how much, too, still is thine !  
Fair the world is, and delighting,  
And all—all thy love inviting,  
Thou canst love, O heart of mine !

---

## XXXVII.

Thou seemest like a flower,  
Pure, sweet, and fair to be,  
And as I gaze a sadness  
Steals o'er my heart for thee.

Methinks my hands should linger  
Upon thy head in prayer,  
That God may ever keep thee  
Thus pure and sweet and fair.

---

XXXVIII.

Child ! nay, 'twould be thy undoing,  
And I strive with might and main  
That thy little heart shall never  
Glow for me in love again.

But, that I succeed too lightly,  
Fills me with a keen regret,  
Still the frequent thought renewing,  
Would that thou didst love me yet.

---

XXXIX.

When on my couch reposing,  
Shrouded in down and night,  
A sweet, fond, winning image  
Floats softly in my sight.

Scarce doth the hushing stillness  
Mine eyes in slumber seal,  
Again that image lightly  
Within my dream doth steal.

Yet with the morning visions  
It fadeth not away,  
For in my heart I bear it  
Throughout the live-long day.

---

## XL.

Maiden with the mouth of roses,  
And that eye so sweet and clear,  
Thou, my darling little maiden,  
In my thoughts art ever here.

Long are now the winter evenings,  
And I would that I were nigh thee,  
In a cosy little chamber  
Prattling with and seated by thee.

That white dainty hand the pressure  
Of my fervent lips should woo,  
And my happy tears in falling  
That white dainty hand bedew.

---

## XLI.

Though in gathering flakes 'tis snowing,  
Hail and storm without loud blowing  
My jarred window-panes are straining,  
Ne'er shall I be found complaining,  
For within my heart I bear  
Springtide and love's image fair.

---

## XLII.

Did not my visage wan betray  
The secret love I bore thee?  
And must the proud lips too entreat  
In suppliant prayer before thee?

Too haughty they, their joy alone  
In kiss and laughter taking,  
They fling perchance a jest the while  
My heart beneath is breaking.

---



## XLIII.

Dear friend, thou art in love,  
And strange pangs themselves are showing ;  
But the gloomier gets thy head,  
Is thy heart e'er clearer growing.

Dear friend, thou art in love,  
And alone art undiscerning,  
For thy heart's flame I behold  
Even through thy waistcoat burning.

---

## XLIV.

At rest to linger by thee,  
    To thy dear side I flew :  
But thou away must hie thee,  
    Thou hadst so much to do.

I vowed, save thee hereafter,  
    My soul no love should know,  
But with full-throated laughter  
    Thou madst me a curtsey low.

Nay, still more hast thou tried me  
    Than all my sorrows past,  
For thou hast e'en denied me  
    A parting kiss at last.

Tho' things thus ill may meet one,  
    I'll harm me not, be sure !  
For all all this, my sweet one,  
    Befell me once before.

---

## XLV.

Twin sapphires are thine azure eyes  
    With love and sweetness beaming;  
And O, thrice happy man on whom  
    Their love-light shimmers streaming.

Thy heart it is a diamond,  
    A dazzling radiance throwing;  
And O, thrice happy man that shares  
    The love within it glowing.

Thy lips two matchless rubies are,  
    Eye lovelier ne'er beholding;  
And O, thrice happy man to whom  
    Their love they breathe unfolding.

Oh, knew I but the man so blest,  
    And found him unattended  
Beneath the green-wood lone, I ween  
    His bliss should soon be ended.

---

## XLVI.

With love-winning words I bound me  
Closely fettered to thy breast;  
Now, with my own meshes round me,  
Into earnest turns my jest.

But since thou dost justly fly me,  
Laughing in thy turn and freed,  
Draw the powers of darkness nigh me,  
And I shoot myself indeed.

---

## XLVII.

Life 's too fragmentary, and the world round it--  
I must to a German professor propound it,  
Who knows how to patch life together, though battered,  
And can to a scheme philosophic give birth ;  
For with his old night-caps and night-gown all tattered  
He stops up the rents in the frame of the earth.

---

## XLVIII.

With pondering long and much reflection  
Day and night was my head distraught,  
Till those sweet eyes of thine, love winning,  
Resolve to my wavering spirit brought.

Now shall I stay where thine eyes do lighten,  
Whose lustre sweet hath an archness caught—  
And yet that again would love possess me,  
This could I never more have thought.

---

## XLIX.

This eve is beauty gathered,  
The house with brightness glows,  
And o'er the window yonder  
A form its shadow throws.

Thou seest me not in the darkness,  
As beneath I stand apart;  
And e'en still less thou seest  
Within my joyless heart.

My joyless heart that loves thee,  
Loves and yet breaks for thee !  
It breaks and bleeds and quivers,  
But this thou dost not see.

---

## L.

I would that my love and its sadness  
Might a single word convey,  
The joyous breezes should bear it,  
And merrily waft it away.

They should waft it to thee, beloved,  
This soft and wailful word,  
At every hour thou shouldst hear it,  
Where'er thou art 'twould be heard.

And when in the night's first slumber  
Thine eyes scarce closing seem,  
Still should my word pursue thee  
Into thy deepest dream.

---



## LI.

Diamonds and pearls are thy dower,  
And all on which mortals set store,  
And thou hast eyes of the fairest—  
My darling, what wouldst thou more?

And to thine eyes in their sweetness  
My muse doth incessant outpour  
Their praises in numbers immortal—  
My darling, what wouldst thou more?

With the shaft of their sunniest glances  
Thou hast smitten my heart to its core.  
And driven me quite to distraction—  
My darling, what wouldst thou more?

---

## LII.

This good youth so sympathetic  
One can scarce enough revere,  
Oft with oysters he regales me  
And Rhine's luscious vintage clear.

Neatly fit him hose and doublet,  
Neater is the tie he dresses,  
And so comes he every morning  
Asking how my health progresses :

Dwells upon my world-wide glory,  
My urbaneness and wit's dower,  
Prompt and busy e'er to do me  
Every service in his power.

And at night in social gatherings,  
With rhapsodic mien rehearses  
To the ladies there assembled  
All my own divinest verses.

Oh, how really delightful  
Such a youth it is in knowing,  
Now in our time when daily  
All good things are scarcer growing.

---

## LIII.

From lovely lips far banished and forth driven,  
From lovely arms entwined around me clinging !  
Yet one day more would I have lingered even,  
When drew the post-boy nigh, his horses bringing.

But such is life, child, one prolonged complaining,  
Endless farewells, eternal separation !  
Could not thy heart hold mine with fond enchaining,  
Nor e'en detain me thine eyes' fascination ?

---

## LIV.

We drove along in the gloomy  
Post-waggon the live-long night,  
Heart upon heart close nestled,  
And jested and laughed with delight.

Yet with the dawn of the morning,  
My child, how astounded we were  
To find Love sitting between us,  
A passenger shirking his fare.

---

## LV.

Heaven knows where the young madcap  
Maiden hath a lodging found !  
Swearing, through the pouring shower  
Race I all the town around.

From one inn impetuous hastening  
To another off I hie,  
And to every boorish waiter  
Turned, alas ! in vain, have I.

There I see her at a casement,  
And she nods and laughs as well,  
Could I know that thou didst live in,  
Maiden, such a grand hotel ?

---

## LVI.

Like gloomy dreams are standing  
The houses in long-drawn row ;  
Close in my mantle shrouded,  
Silently past I go.

From the cathedral tower  
Twelve slow reverberates,  
And with her caresses and kisses,  
My darling for me waits.

The moon my steps is guiding  
And her friendly light' she flings,  
And now as I reach her dwelling  
My joyful voice loud rings.

I thank thee my olden comrade  
That thou o'er my path hast shone;  
And now a farewell I bid thee,  
The rest of the world shine on !

And if thou findest a lover  
Who lone o'er his sorrows doth sigh,  
Console him as thou, too, hast often  
Consoled me in days gone by.

---

## LVII.

When thou shalt be my wedded wife,  
And envied without measure,  
In pastime shall glide by thy life,  
One round of joy and pleasure.

And if thou frown and if thou chide,  
Still shall I murmur never ;  
But if my verses thou deride,  
We say farewell for ever.

---

## LVIII.

Upon thy snow-white shoulder  
    My head doth drooping lie,  
And hears while furtive listening  
    For what thy heart doth sigh.

The blue hussars come clattering  
    Through the gate, and the trumpets bray,  
To-morrow my heart's beloved  
    Leaves me at break of day.

And wilt thou at morn thus leave me?  
    To-day thou shalt give to me,  
And in thy fair arms folded,  
    My bliss shall doubled be.

---



## LIX.

The blue hussars ride trumpeting  
Out through the gate away ;  
Now come I, sweet, and bring thee  
A cluster of roses gay.

Oh ! 'twas a rare wild riot !  
A plague of a dragoonade ;  
Within thy little heart even  
Some had their quarters made.

---

## LX.

In youth's by-gone years wasted  
Many a bitter pang I've tasted,  
From love's ardent glow.

The fuel is too dear—the fire  
Of itself doth soon expire :

*Ma foi !* tis better so.

Then, bethink thee, maiden dear,  
Chase away the idle tear,  
And love's fond alarms.

Is life left thee ere its setting?  
Come, the olden love forgetting,  
*Ma foi !* within my arms.

---

## LXI.

Dost thou really, then, so hate me?  
Art thou really changed so sadly?  
To the world must I complain, then,  
That thou treatest me so badly?

O ye lips, ungrateful ever,  
Say what is it hath possessed you,  
To decry the man so loving  
Who in happier days hath pressed you?

---

## LXII.

Again the loving eyes are on me  
Which of yore for me did brighten,  
And the lips now bloom before me  
That did life with sweetness lighten.

And again I hear the music  
Of the voice I heard so gladly ;  
'Tis but I that, home returning,  
Have thus changed alone so sadly.

In those beauteous arms and snowy,  
That so fast and loving bind me,  
On her heart though pillowed do I  
Listless and unheeding find me.

---

## LXIII.

Thou hast understood me rarely,  
    'Twas rare I caught thy drift aright;  
But when both in the mud stuck fairly,  
    We understood each other quite.

---

## LXIV.

Over Salamanca's ramparts  
Soft refreshing winds are blowing ;  
There I stroll with my sweet donna,  
For a summer ramble going.

Round the shapely form of Beauty  
My entwining arm is stealing,  
And my happy hand the beating  
Of her throbbing heart is feeling.

But a dark foreboding whisper  
Through the linden trees is swelling,  
And, beneath, the gloomy mill-stream  
Is its dreams of horror telling.

Ah, señora, a misgiving  
Warns me I from thee must sever,  
And on Salamanca's ramparts  
We again shall ramble never.

---

## LXV.

Near me dwelleth Don Henriquez,  
    Called "the handsome" in addition ;  
Neighbouring are our chambers,  
    Parted by a thin partition.

Flush the dames of Salamanca  
    As he strides the streets descending,  
Clinking spurs, moustachios twirling,  
    And his faithful hounds attending.

But in evening's silent hour,  
    All alone at home when sitting,  
In his hands doth his guitar lie,  
    Sweet dreams o'er his spirit flitting.

Tremblingly the strings he touches,  
    Some strange phantasy beginning,  
Ah, like caterwauling, plagues me  
    All his strumming and his dinning.

---

## LXVI.

In thy eyes and thy voice, as we first saw each other,  
I marked a devotion too clear to be missed,  
And had there not stood by thy troublesome mother,  
I think then and there we must surely have kissed.

I left the dear town as the morning was breaking  
To haste on the round of my rambles anew ;  
And there at the window my fair maid lurked waking,  
And I wafted aloft a last loving adieu.

---



## LXVII.

Over the mountains the sun rises bright,  
The lambkins in flocks tinkle far o'er the glen,  
My darling, my lambkin, my sun, my delight,  
How glad would I be might I see thee again !

Aloft my wistfullest glances are roving,  
“ Farewell, my child, I must wander from thee ! ”  
In vain ! for never a curtain is moving,  
She lies still and sleeps—is she dreaming of me ?

---

## LXVIII.

The summer evening's haze lies spreading  
Over wood and verdant meadow ;  
The golden moon i' the azure heaven  
Streams adown, a fragrance shedding.

The cricket chirps by the brook with shrillness,  
And a rippling stirs the water,  
And the rambler hears a splashing  
And a breathing in the stillness.

By the brook alone and darkling  
Is the lovely fairy bathing ;  
Arm and neck all sweet and snowy  
Are beneath the moonlight sparkling.

---

## LXIX.

O'er wild tracks the night is lowering,—  
Weary limbs and heart of woe;—  
Ah ! like silent blessings showering,  
Streams, sweet moon, thy light below.

Sweet moon, with thy glory brightly  
Thou dost scare the night's grim fears ;  
All my pangs dissolving lightly,  
And my eyes are dewed with tears.

---

LXX.

Death is but refreshing night,  
Life it is a sultry day.  
Dusk it grows, and slumber woos me,  
Wearied with day's fading light.

O'er my couch a tree grows near,  
Where warbles a young nightingale,  
Love's ecstatic carols raining,  
Which as in a dream I hear.

---

## LXXI.

Say, where is thy queen of beauty,  
Sung by thee in bygone hour,  
When love's spell-enkindled fires  
Pierced thy heart with wondrous power?

Ah ! those flames are quenched for ever,  
And my heart is chilled and sighing,  
And as in an urn these pages  
Hold enshrined love's ashes lying.

---

## Götterdämmerung.

Now May hath come with all her golden splendours,  
Her silken breezes and her fragrant balm,  
And sweetly lures us with her snowy flowers,  
And greets us from a thousand blue-eyed violets,  
And spreads a carpet blossom-flecked of green,  
With sunshine interweaved and morning dew,  
And summons to her side earth's children dear.  
The simple folk at the first call obey ;  
The men disport themselves in nankin hose  
And Sunday coats with golden buttons bright ;  
The women robed in white of innocence ;  
Youths their newly-sprung moustachios twirl,  
And maidens move in all their budding charms ;  
The poets of the town their pockets fill  
With paper, pencil, and lorgnette ; and joyous  
Press on towards the gate the motley crowd  
And fling themselves without upon the sward,  
Wondering how the trees so briskly grow,  
Play with the many-hued and tender flowers,  
List to the carol of the merry birds,  
And shout exulting up to Heaven's blue vault.

To me, too, May advanced. She tapped three times

Upon my door, exclaiming, "I am May,  
Thou pale-faced dreamer, come, for I must kiss thee."  
I held my door close-fastened, and cried out :  
"In vain thou courtest me, thou graceless visitor,  
For I have fathomed thee, and I have probed  
The fabric of the world, and seen too much  
And far too deep, and vanished are all joys,  
And pangs eternal throng into my heart.  
I see within the hard and stony shells  
Of human dwellings and of human hearts,  
And see in both but guile and fraud and misery.  
Upon their features can I read their thoughts  
More hateful. In the maiden's modest blush  
I see the secret tremor of desire ;  
Upon the proud enraptured head of youth  
I see the gay and laughing cap and bells ;  
And mockeries alone and sickly shadows  
I see upon this earth, and I know not  
If it be Bedlam or a lazar-house.  
I see within the crust of the old earth  
As t'were of crystal, and behold the terrors  
That with her joyous verdure to conceal  
May strives in vain. I do behold the dead ;  
They lie below within their narrow coffins,  
The hands are folded and the eyes do stare,  
Ghastly their faces and their raiment ghastly,  
And through the lips there crawl the yellow worms.

I see the son that with his lass doth sit  
For pastime down upon his father's grave ;  
The nightingales sing mocking carols round,  
The tender meadow-blossoms laugh in scorn,  
E'en the dead father stirs within his grave,  
And anguish-stricken thrills old mother Earth.

“Thou, poor Earth, thy sorrows well I know !  
I see the fire within thy bosom raging,  
And see thee bleed in all thy thousand veins,  
And see thy gaping wounds asunder rent,  
And wild out-streaming flames and fume and blood.  
Thy giant sons defiant I behold,  
Primeval brood, from dark abysses surging,  
And whirling fiery torches in their hands ;  
Their iron scaling-ladders they advance,  
And wild they storm the citadel of Heaven,  
And sable dwarfs climb after them, and crashing  
Vanish yonder all the golden stars.  
With daring hand they rend the golden veil  
Before the Court of God, and shrieking fall  
On prostrate faces the angelic legions,  
And nearer onward press the raging crowd.  
The giants hurl afar their lurid torches  
In the wild realm of Heaven. Smite the dwarfs  
With flame-wrought scourges the angelic shoulders



Which writhe and crouch beneath for very anguish.  
And mine own guardian-angel there I see,  
With his fair flowing locks and features sweet,  
And with eternal love around his mouth  
And heavenly bliss within his eyes of blue.  
And a forbidding hideous sable goblin  
Uplifts him from the ground, my blanchéd angel,  
And leers grinning on his noble limbs,  
And clasps him fast around within his grasp,—  
And piercing runs a cry throughout the universe,  
The pillars totter, Earth and Heaven together  
In ruins fall, and night primeval reigns.”

---

## Ratcliff.

The dream-god carried me unto a landscape,  
Where weeping willows waved to me a welcome  
With their long arms of green, and where the flowers  
Gazed on me calmly with arch sisterly eyes,  
Where twitter of birds did sound familiarly,  
Where e'en the dogs' bay seemed as known to me,  
And voices, too, and forms did greeting proffer,  
As to a friend of old, and yet where all  
Did seem so strange to me, so wondrous strange.  
Before a trim and rustic house I stood,  
My bosom agitated, but my brain  
Was calm, and calmly did I shake aside  
The dust from off my garments travel-stained.  
The bell rang shrilly and the door flew wide.  
Within were men and women, long-familiar  
Faces. A silent sorrow lay on all,  
And care suppressed and hidden. Strangely troubled,  
With looks of sympathy they gazed on me,  
That through my very soul a shudder ran,  
As presaging calamity unknown.  
Old Margaret I recognised at once;  
I scanned her pryingly, but she spake not.  
"Where is Marie?" I asked; yet she spake not,  
But softly took my hand and led me on

Through many chambers long and glittering,  
Where reigned state, pomp, and stillness as of death,  
And guided me at length to a dim chamber,  
And with averted visage did she point  
Unto a form that on a couch reclined.  
“Are you Marie?” I questioned. Inwardly  
Was I myself astounded at the firmness  
With which I spoke. And stony and metallic  
A voice rang jarringly: “So people call me.”  
A cutting pang shot through me at the word,  
For could that cold and hollow tone then be  
The once so sweet attuned voice of Marie!  
And that same form in faded lilac robe,  
Carelessly thrown on and loosely zoned,  
With rigid eyes and glassy, and the cheeks  
Relaxed in roundness of the face so wan—  
Ah! could she be the once so beautiful,  
The blooming, sweet, adorable Marie!  
“Long have your travels been,” she said aloud,  
With cold and strange familiarity;  
“You seem not quite so slim, my dear friend,  
You are in health and sturdy reins and limbs  
Betoken lustiness.” A gentle smile  
Stole breaking round the sickly pallid mouth.  
In my bewilderment the words broke from me:  
“I have been told of late that you have wedded!”  
“Ah yes!” she said, with careless laugh and loud,

“I have a block of wood that is encased  
With leather, called a husband ; yet is wood  
But wood ! ” and laughed with jangling dissonance,  
Till a cold horror through my soul did run,  
And the doubt seized me—can this be the modest,  
The flower-like purity of the lips of Marie !  
Then rose she up erect, and quickly seized  
Her cashmere from the seat, and throwing it  
Around her neck she clung unto my arm,  
And drew me thence beyond the open door,  
And led me forth through field and copse and  
meadow.

The glowing ruddy sun’s suspended orb  
Hung low, and shed around its crimson rays  
Upon the trees and flowers, and the stream  
That did afar majestically glide.

“Dost see the mighty golden eye that swims  
In the blue water ? ” quickly cried Marie.

“Hush, hapless creature ! ” breathed I, and beheld  
A wondrous movement in the twilight dim.  
Cloud-forms of mist arose from out the fields,  
And interlaced their soft and snowy arms !  
The violets eyed each other sweetly, love-sick  
The chalice lilies towards each other bent ;  
The roses all were fired with fervid rapture ;  
Carnations fain into a breath would kindle,  
And every flower in happy fragrance revelled,

And all in weeping shed still tears of joy,  
And jubilantly hymning : " Love ! Love ! Love ! "  
Fluttered the butterflies, the luminous  
Golden beetle hummed his faery lays,  
The evening breezes whispered soft and rustled  
The oaks, the nightingale sang meltingly,  
And all atween the whispering, rustling, singing,  
Low babbled with metallic cold dull voice,  
The faded form that to my arm did cling.  
" I know thy nightly doings at the castle,  
And the long shadow is a worthy creature,  
He nods and becks to all as one doth will ;  
The Bluecoat is an angel ; but the Red  
With the drawn sword is deadly hostile to you."  
And in such wondrous wildering discourse  
She babbled in a breath, and then did sit  
Wearied with me upon a bank of moss  
That lay beneath an old ancestral oak.

There we reclined together still and sad,  
And ever sadder gazed we on each other.  
The oaks did rustle as the dying sigh,  
And sang the nightingales with deepest melancholy.  
Yet ruddy sunbeams, glancing through the leaves,  
Around Marie's wan features sparkling played,  
And lured a glow from out her fixed eyes,

And in the old sweet accents did she say :  
“ How knewest thou that I am so unhappy ? ”  
“ I read it but of late in thy wild numbers.”

An icy shudder pierced my breast, I trembled  
At my own reason's frenzy which beheld  
The future ; shot through all my brain a gloom,  
And, in sheer consternation, I awoke.

---

## LXXIV.

In the garden roamed at éven,  
Listless, the Alcaid's daughter,  
While the clash of drums and clarions  
From the castle pealed exulting.

“ Weary are to me the dances,  
And the honied adulation,  
And the knights who all so courteous  
With the sun in heaven compare me.

“ Wearier still to me is all since  
Saw I in the streaming moonlight  
A young knight whose lute melodious  
Lures me to my window nightly.

“ There he stood so lithe and gallant,  
And his eyes their lightnings flashing  
From his pale and noble visage,  
A St. George in truth resembling.”

Thus in meditation gazing  
On the ground was Donna Clara ;  
As she looked up, in his beauty  
Stood the unknown knight before her.

Hand in hand with loving whispers  
Wander they beneath the moonlight,  
And the zephyr wafts a welcome,  
Faery-like the roses greet them.

Faery-like the roses greet them,  
Like love's messengers a blushing,—  
“But pray tell me, my beloved,  
Why hast thou so sudden crimsoned?”

“’Twas the midges stung me dearest,  
And the midges are in summer,  
As abhorred by me, as were they  
Long-nosed Israelitish rabble.”

“Leave the Israelites and midges,”  
Said the knight, with soft caressing :  
From the almond-trees were falling  
Thousand snowy flakes of blossom.

Thousand snowy flakes of blossom  
Were their luscious fragrance shedding,  
“But pray tell me, my beloved,  
Is thine heart, then, mine entirely?”

Bathed in light the snowy lilies  
To the stars above are gazing ;  
“But pray tell me, my beloved,  
Hast thou, then, not falsely sworn it?”



“ Falsehood is not in me, dearest,  
As within my heart there flows not  
One sole drop of blood of Moors  
Nor of Israel’s sordid people.”

“ Leave the Israelites and Moors,”  
Said the knight with fond caressing,  
As towards a myrtle bower  
Led he the Alcaid’s daughter.

With love’s subtly woven meshes  
Hath he secretly entwined her !  
Brief words, but long lingering kisses,  
And their hearts are overflowing.

Sweet the bridal song and melting  
Which the nightingale fond warbles,  
While as in a dance of flambeaux  
Frolic fire-flies around them.

Stillter grows the silent bower,  
And alone is heard the stealthy  
Whisper of the listening myrtles  
And the breathing of the flowers.

Suddenly the drums and clarions  
Echo loudly from the castle,  
And, up-springing, Donna Clara  
From the knight’s embrace withdrew her.

“ List ! that calls me thither, dearest ;  
Yet, before we part asunder,  
Thou thy dear name must tell me,  
Which thou long from me hast hidden.”

And the knight with merry laughter  
Kissed the finger of his lady,  
Lightly kissed her lips and forehead,  
And these words at length he uttered :

“ I, Señora, your belovéd,  
Am the son of the renownéd  
Great and learned scribe, the Rabbi  
Israel of Saragossa.”

---

## LXXV.

## 1.

In the Duomo of Cordova  
There are columns thirteen hundred,  
Thirteen hundred giant columns  
Bear the cupola stupendous.

And the dome and walls and columns  
Bear inscribed from base to summit  
The Korán's Arabian cipher,  
Deft and flowery interwoven.

Moorish kings did whilom fashion  
This high fane to Allah's glory,  
But hath much been interverted  
In the dark whirl of the ages.

On the turrets, where the warders  
Unto prayer were wont to summon,  
Are the Christian bells intoning  
With a melancholy clangour.

In the Duomo of Cordova  
Stands Almansor ben Abdullah,  
Gazing calmly on the columns,  
And these bated words he murmured :

“ O ye columns, strong and mighty,  
Once adorned to Allah’s glory,  
Now must ye do lowly homage  
To this Christendom abhorrent !

“ Ye conform ye with the ages,  
And ye bear your load in patience ;  
So then surely must the weaker  
Be more easily submissive.”

And his head, with beaming visage,  
Bent Almansor ben Abdullah  
O’er the goodly font baptismal  
In the Duomo of Cordova.

---

2.

Swiftly strode he from the Duomo,  
Galloped forth on his wild courser,  
While upon the breeze his dewy  
Locks and helmet’s plume were dancing.

On the road to Alcolea,  
All adown the Guadalquiver,  
Where the snowy almonds blossom,  
And the fragrant golden orange :

Thither spurs the knight light-hearted,  
Sings and whistles and laughs gaily,  
With the warbling birds in chorus,  
And the stream's resounding waters.

Within Alcolea's castle  
Dwelleth Clara de Alvares,  
In Navarre her sire is warring,  
And in light restraint she revels.

From afar now hears Almansor  
Drums and clarions resounding,  
And the castle lights beholds he  
Glancing through the shady forest.

Within Alcolea's castle  
Dance twelve gay-apparelled ladies,  
Dance twelve knights in gay apparel,  
But most deftly moves Almansor.

As if winged by joyous humour,  
All around the hall he flutters,  
And to every dame well knoweth  
Sweetest flatteries to whisper.

The fair hands of Isabella  
Lightly kisses he, and springs thence ;  
And he sits him by Elvira,  
And her face scans debonnairly.

-

Laughing asks he Leonora  
If to-day her favour wins he?  
And his golden cross discovers  
Richly broidered on his mantle.

To each lady he protesteth  
That within his heart he bears her;  
“As I am a Christian,” swore he  
Thirty times upon that evening.

---

## 3.

Within Alcolea's castle  
Fled is all the mirth and music,  
Vanished have the knights and ladies,  
And the lights are all extinguished.

Donna Clara and Almansor  
In the hall unheeded linger,  
While one solitary lustre  
Over both its glimmer showers.

On a settle sits the lady,  
And the knight sits on a footstool,  
And his head with slumber weary  
On the dear knees reposes.

Rose-oil from a golden flasket  
Pours the lady, pensive musing,  
On the brown locks of Almansor—  
And deep from his heart he sigheth.

Sweetest kiss with mouth of softness  
Pressed the lady, pensive musing,  
On the brown locks of Almansor—  
And his brow with gloom is clouded.

Flow of tears from eyes resplendent  
Weeps the lady, pensive musing,  
On the brown locks of Almansor—  
And his lips convulsive quiver.

And he dreameth : again stands he,  
With head lowly bent, and tearful,  
In the Duomo of Cordova  
And he lists to sullen voices.

All the lofty giant columnus  
Hears he murmur in fell anger,  
Longer can they not endure it,  
And they totter and they tremble.

And they wildly reel together,  
And all pale grow priests and people ;  
Crashing falls the dome down headlong,  
And the Christian gods shriek wailing.

---

## LXXVI.

## 1.

At her window stands the mother,  
The son on his pallet lies,  
“ See the procession passes,  
Haste, Wilhelm, haste and rise ! ”

“ I am faint and weary, mother,  
Nought see I, and nought hear ;  
My aching heart broods ever  
O'er my dead Gretchen dear.”

“ Arise ! we 'll hie to Kevlaar  
With beads and book depart,  
And there God's holy Mother  
Shall heal thy aching heart.”

The hallowed banners flutter,  
The solemn chants rise high,  
As through Cologne moves slowly  
The long procession by.

In the crowd her son slow leading  
The mother follows now,  
And they swell the pealing chorus  
“ Mary ! Blessed be thou ! ”

---



## 2.

At Kevlaar the Virgin Mother  
    Stands robed in rich array,  
For the sick and the lame come thronging,  
    Whom she must heal to-day.

At her shrine the maiméd sufferers  
    With votive offerings stand,  
Wrought limbs of wax, and many  
    A waxen foot and hand.

A waxen hand who offers,  
    Of his own shall heal the sore,  
And a waxen foot shall straightway  
    A foot to health restore.

To Kevlaar went many on crutches  
    That now on a rope can bound,  
And many now sweep the viol  
    That there had no finger sound.

A heart from a waxen taper  
    The mother fashions fair :  
"This bear to the Holy Virgin,  
    And she shall soothe thy care."

Her son the heart took, sighing,  
Sighing to the shrine drew nigh,  
The words from his full heart streaming,  
While streamed the tears from his eye.

“Thou blest above all women,  
“God’s Virgin Mother dear!  
Thou glorious Queen of Heaven,  
My prayer benignly hear!

“There dwelt I with my mother,  
Where stately Cologne lies,  
The town where a hundred altars  
And many a temple rise.

“And near us dwelt my Gretchen,  
But she sleeps ’neath the cold grave-stone:  
Mary, this heart I bring thee,  
Heal thou what breaks my own!

“Heal thou its wasting languor  
And early and late I vow  
Shall rise my fervent anthems,  
Mary, blessed be thou!”

---

## 3.

The drooping son and the mother  
In a chamber still repose,  
When lo ! within soft gliding,  
The Virgin Mother goes.

Then lowly o'er the sufferer  
She bent her as he lay,  
On his heart her hand placed lightly,  
Smiled sweet, and passed away.

Thus dreamed the mother while ever  
Strange scenes in her vision crowd ;  
She started awake from slumber,  
For the dogs were baying loud.

In the sleep that knows no waking  
Out-stretched her dead son lay,  
O'er his bloodless cheeks light playing  
The crimson flush of day.

With folded hands the mother  
Gazed stricken, she knew not how.  
In a low wail breathed she meekly,  
“ Mary, blessed be thou ! ”

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# Aus der Harzreise.

1824.

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## Prologue.

Black surtouts and silken stockings,  
 White and courtly ruffles in them,  
 Speech so smooth, and such embracing,—  
 Oh ! had they but hearts within them.

Hearts and love within their bosoms,  
 Warm love in their bosoms burning—  
 Oh ! it kills me—all their canting,  
 Hypocritical love-yearning

Up the mountains will I hie me  
 Where the quiet huts are showing,  
 Where the breast may open freely,  
 And the breezes free are blowing.

Up the mountains will I hie me,  
Where the gloomy pines are roaring,  
Torrents rush and birds are singing,  
And the haughty clouds are soaring.

Fare ye well, ye polished chambers,  
Silken gallants, dames of fashion !  
Up the mountains will I hie me,  
And smile on you with compassion.

---

Berg-Idylle.

I.

In the cottage on the mountain  
 Dwells the aged mountaineer;  
 There the dark green pines are rustling,  
 And the golden moon shines clear.

In the cottage stands a settle,  
 Carved with wondrous art, and high;  
 Happy he who there reclineth,  
 And that happy one am I!

On a footstool doth the maiden  
 Leaning on my lap repose;  
 Eyes twin stars of azure seeming,  
 And her mouth a crimson rose.

And from those sweet eyes of azure  
 Heavenly lustre on me glows,  
 And she lays her lily finger  
 Archly on the crimson rose.

No, she sees us not, the mother  
 Plying her busy wheel amain,  
 And the father strikes the zither,  
 And he sings the olden strain.

And the little one soft whispers,  
Soft her bated accents steal ;  
For full many a weighty secret  
Doth she oft to me reveal.

“ Since the aunt is dead, we cannot  
Now, of course, again repair  
To the shooting-court at Goslar,  
And it is too lovely there !

“ While 'tis here so very lonely  
On the cold hill-tops you know,  
And in winter we are wholly  
As if buried in the snow.

“ And I am a timid maiden,  
Like a child I quake with fright  
At the wicked mountain-goblins  
Who so busy are at night.”

Sudden ceased the little maiden,  
At her prattle as dismayed,  
And her tiny hands together  
On her little eyes she laid.

And the pines without roar louder,  
Drones the wheel with whirring fly,  
And between the zither tinkles  
With the olden melody.

Fear thee not, sweet little maiden,  
At the wicked goblins' might,  
Watch o'er thee, sweet little maiden,  
Keep the angels day and night.

---

## 2.

Pine trees with their dark green fingers  
Tap the little casement in,  
And the moon, the stealthy listener,  
Flings her golden light within.

Father, mother, snore all lightly  
In the little bedroom by ;  
While we keep awake together  
Prattling sweetly—she and I.

“ Hard 'twould be for me to credit  
That thou breathest oft a prayer,  
For thy lips' convulsive movement  
Doth not come from praying there.

“ That cold wicked sneer that ever  
Fills me with a strange affright,  
But my gloomy fear is tempered  
By thine eyes' unruffled light.



*[The page contains several horizontal black bars obscuring the original text.]*

“ He hath wrought the greatest wonders,  
And works greater yet than erst ;  
He hath smote the tyrant’s strongholds,  
And the yoke of serfdom burst.

“ Ancient death wounds he assuageth,  
Doth the ancient right replace ;  
All mankind, in birth co-equal,  
Form alike one noble race.

“ He doth drive the mists of evil  
And the phantom dire away,  
That disturbs our love and gladness,  
Gibes and flouts us night and day.

“ Thousand knights encased in armour  
Hath the Holy Ghost inspired,  
To fulfil His holy pleasure,  
And their souls with ardour fired.

“ Flash their trusty swords like lightning,  
Wave their banners’ sacred fold !  
Oh ! ’twould gladden thee my childie,  
Knights so noble to behold !

“ Now, upon me gaze—my childie,  
Kiss me—look with fearless eye,  
For a knight, e’en such another,  
Of the Holy Ghost am I ”

---

## 3.

Hushed without, the moon is hiding  
    Low behind the gloomy firs,  
And the lamp within our chamber  
    With a dying flicker stirs.

But my little stars of azure  
    Shed around their lustrous rays,  
And the crimson rose-bud blushes,  
    And the darling maiden says :

“ Little elfins and hobgoblins  
    Steal our bread and bacon’s store,  
In the chest it lies at even,  
    In the morning—there no more.

“ And our cream the little elfins  
    Sip from off the milk with zest,  
Coverless the platter leaving  
    And the cat laps up the rest.

“ And the cat, too, sure a witch is,  
    For when night and tempest lower,  
Steals she to yon haunted mountain,  
    To the ancient, ruined tower.

“ There of old did stand a castle,  
    Where arms flashed mid revel high,  
Glittering knights and dames and squires  
    Whirled in merry torch-dance by.

“ But accursed have folk and castle  
By a wicked sorceress been,  
And alone are ruins standing,  
And the owls build nests therein.

“ Yet the aunt that 's dead would whisper,  
That when once the chosen word,  
Nightly at the chosen hour  
At yon chosen spot is heard,

“ In a trice are changed the ruins  
Back into a castle bright,  
And in merry dance they mingle  
Once again, squire, dame, and knight.

“ And whoso the word doth utter  
Folk and castle shall possess,  
Drums and trumpets sound in homage  
To his youthful lordliness.”

Thus bloom tales of fairy legend  
From the little mouth of rose,  
And the while a star-like radiance  
From her eyes of azure glows.

Round my hand her golden tresses  
Twines the little maiden fast,  
Calls by pretty names my fingers,  
Laughs and kisses, hushed at last.

And all in the silent chamber  
    Friendly glances at me throw ;  
Cupboard, table, seem as had I  
    Once beheld them long ago.

Ticks the clock demure and friendly,  
    Scarce heard doth the zither seem  
Of itself as if to tinkle,  
    And I sit as in a dream.

Now is it the chosen hour,  
    And the chosen spot as well ;  
Yes—meseems as if there glided  
    From my lips the chosen spell.

“ Seest thou, childie, how already  
    Looms the midnight hour and quakes !  
Roar the pines and torrent louder  
    And the ancient mountain wakes.

“ Zither tones and songs of pigmies  
    From the mountain chasm sound,  
And forth as in spring run riot  
    Blooms a flowery wood around.

“ Flowers, wanton magic flowers,  
    Broad-leaved as in fairy land,  
Fragrant, bright, and hotly eager,  
    As by thrilling passion fanned.

“ Wild as ruddy flames, the roses  
Through the glowing bevy fling,  
Lilies, like to shafts of crystal,  
Upwards high as heaven spring.

“ And the stars, like suns in vastness,  
With deep yearning gaze below :  
In the giant-chaliced lilies  
Streams their light in radiant flow.

“ But are we ourselves, sweet childie,  
Altered even more than they ;  
Silk and gold and gleam of torches  
All around us sparkle gay.

“ Thou—a princess art transfigured,  
And this hut 's a castle bright,  
And rejoicing here and dancing  
Are esquire and dame and knight.

“ And I, too,—yes, I henceforward  
Thee, folk, castle, all possess,  
Drums and trumpets sound in homage  
To my youthful lordliness ! ”

---

## II.

The shepherd boy—he is a monarch,  
And the mossy hill his throne,  
And the sun o'er head above him  
Is his mighty golden crown.

At his feet the sheep are lying,  
Red-crossed gentle courtiers they,  
And the calves are cavaliers,  
And they wander proudly gay.

And court-players are the kidlings,  
And the birds and cattle stand  
With their piping and their tinkling  
For the royal household band.

And oh ! sweet the song and music !  
And oh ! sweet the roaring sweeps  
Of the waterfall and pine-trees,  
And the monarch gently sleeps.

And meanwhile for him must govern  
As a minister, his hound,  
Whose impetuous loud baying  
Doth re-echo all around.

Sleepily the youthful monarch  
Lisps : "How hard it is to reign,  
Ah ! I would I were already  
With my queen at home again !

"In my consort's arms reposing,  
Soft my kingly head doth lie,  
And within her eyes of beauty  
Is my endless monarchy."

---



On the Brocken.

III.

In the East it gloweth brighter  
By the sun's last glimmer kissed,  
Far and wide the mountain summits  
Ride through seas of cloudy mist.

Had I seven-leagued boots, O straightway  
With the speed of wind I'd fly,  
Over yonder mountain summits  
To my darling's dwelling nigh.

Lightly would I where she slumbers  
Ope the little curtained bed,  
Lightly kiss her on her forehead,  
Lightly her mouth's rubies red.

And more lightly would I whisper  
Her small lily ear within,  
"Dream that we still love each other  
And have never parted been."

---

## IV.

I am the Princess Ise,  
In Ilsenstein dwell I,  
Come with me to my castle,  
And blest the days shall fly.

I'll bathe thy temples gently  
Where my clear waters shine,  
And thou'lt forget thy sorrows,  
Thou woe-sick gallant mine!

And in my arms so snowy,  
And on my breast of snow,  
Lie dreaming joyous legends  
Of ages long ago.

And I will kiss and caress thee  
As I kissed and caressed  
The gentle Kaiser Heinrich  
Now gone unto his rest.

The dead are dead ; the living  
In life alone have part ;  
And I am fair and blooming,  
And leaps my laughing heart.

Come down unto my castle,  
My crystal castle fair,  
Where dance the knights and maidens,  
And joyous squires are there.

There silken trains are rustling,  
And ring the spurs of steel,  
There dwarfs sound drums and clarions,  
And horns and viols peal.

My arms shall twine about thee  
As they Kaiser Heinrich bound ;—  
With closed ears I held him  
When rang the trumpet's sound.

---

# Die Nordsee.

1825-1826.



## I.

Ye songs ! ye mine own dear songs  
Up, up ! and arm yourselves !  
Bid the clarions resound,  
And lift me on the shield  
This youthful maiden,  
Who now o'er my whole heart  
Holds empire as a Queen.

Hail to thee ! thou young Queen !

From the sun above  
I snatch the streaming ruddy gold,  
And weave of it a diadem  
For thine all-hallowed head.

From the fluttering azure silk veil of Heaven,  
Wherein the diamonds of night sparkle,  
I sunder a precious fragment  
And fold it as coronation-mantle  
About thy royal shoulders.  
I give thee a court household  
Of prim-attired Sonnets,  
Of haughty Terzines and courtly Stanzas;  
As footman my wit shall serve thee,  
As court-fool, my phantasy,  
As herald, the laughing tears scutcheoned,  
My humour shall serve thee.  
But for myself, O Queen,  
I lowly kneel before thee,  
And in homage, on crimson velvet cushion,  
    I present unto thee  
    The morsel of sense  
That out of pity hath still left me,  
Thy predecessor in the realm.

---

## II.

On the wan shore of ocean  
I sat me troubled in thought and alone,  
Deeper the sun had sunk and flung  
Red-glowing shafts upon the water,  
And the broad white waves,  
Spurred by the tide,  
Foamed and roared nearer and nearer—  
A wondrous bluster, a whispering and whistling,  
A laughing and murmuring, sighing and souging,  
And between, a cradle-song's mystic lullaby.  
Methought that I listened to bygone sagas,  
Olden beautiful legends  
That of yore as a boy  
I heard from the neighbours' children,  
When we on summer's eve,  
On the house-door's stone-steps  
To the hushed tale all huddled close,  
With little listening hearts  
And all-enquiring eyes :  
While the elder maidens,  
Near flower-stands breathing fragrance,  
Sat over against at the casement  
With rosy faces,  
Laughing, and lit by the moon.

---

## III.

The ruddy glowing sun descends  
Beneath the broad far-tremulous  
Silver-gray sea world :  
Visions of air, flushing with roseate breath,  
Float in his wake : and opposite  
From wan autumnal veils of cloud,  
A sad and death-pale face,  
    Breaks the moon without ;  
And, following her, scintillant,  
Nebulous, shimmer the stars.

Of yore in heaven glittered,  
    In wedded union,  
The goddess Luna and Sol the god,  
And the stars all clustered round about them,  
Their little innocent children.  
But evil tongues whispered discord,  
And they parted in anger,  
The radiant pair sublime.

Now by day in lonely splendour  
Stalks the sun-god yonder above,  
    For his majesty  
Besought and much extolled

Of proud and bliss-hardened mortals,  
While in the night  
O'er heaven wanders Luna,  
The hapless mother,  
With all her orphaned starry children ;  
And she beams in silent melancholy,  
And loving maidens and tender poets  
Vow her their tears and song.

Gentle Luna, with womanly heart,  
Loves she still ever her glorious spouse ;  
At even, trembling and pale,  
Glances she out from gossamer clouds,  
And watches him vanishing sadly,  
And fain would cry out in anguish "Come !  
Come, thy children all yearn for thee."

But the imperious sun-god,  
At the sight of his spouse deep flushes  
In purple redoubled,  
With wrath and grief,  
And inexorably speeds he below  
Into his wave-cold widowed bed.

Evil whispering tongues  
Brought, in this wise, grief and perdition  
E'en o'er the god-heads immortal,  
And the hapless deities, yonder in heaven,



Wander in agony,  
Hopeless, o'er ways never ending,  
And die can they never  
And carry with them  
Their radiant anguish.

I, the man  
Here below rooted, by death to be gladdened,  
I sorrow no longer.

---

## IV.

Starless and chill is the night,  
The ocean foams ;  
And over the sea, prostrate extended,  
Lies the misshapen north wind,  
And stealthy, with groaning, deep-stifled voice,  
Like petulant grumbler to good humour won,  
Mutters he low to the waves,  
And many a mad tale recounts he,  
Legends of ogres, breathing of slaughter,  
Primeval sagas from Norway,  
And between far-resounding laughs he and howls he  
Mystic chants of the Edda,  
And Runic legends,  
Dark, defiant, of magical power,  
Till the white sons of ocean  
Leap up aloft, exulting,  
Inebriate with frenzy.

Meanwhile on the level sea-shore,  
On the wave-inundated sand,  
Paces a stranger whose heart within him  
Is wilder far than wind and billows.  
Where'er he treads  
Sparks fly forth and the shells grate crackling ;

And he wraps him close in his hoar-grey mantle,  
And marches swift through the boisterous night,  
Guided securely by the small taper  
That luring and lovingly glimmers  
From the lone fisherman's cottage.

Father and brother are far at sea,  
And utterly alone rests yonder  
In the cottage the fisherman's daughter,  
The wondrous lovely fisherman's daughter,  
At the hearth sits she,  
And listens to the water-kettle's  
Homely sound of sweetest augury,  
And the crackling fagots throws on the fire,  
And blows thereon,  
Till the flickering ruddy light  
Reflected streams with magic loveliness  
On the blooming features,  
On the soft snowy shoulder  
Which, slipping, peeps rising  
From out the rough grey smock,  
And on the little vigilant hand  
That her petticoat binds more firmly  
Round the slender waist.

But swiftly the door springs open,  
And the night's stranger enters within,  
Calm in love his eye reposes

Upon the snowy, slender maiden  
That tremblingly stands before him  
Like to a startled lily ;  
And to earth he tosses his mantle,  
And laughs, and says :

See'st thou, my child, I keep my word,  
And I come, and comes with me  
The olden time, when the gods of heaven  
Descended unto the daughters of men,  
And the daughters of mortals wooing,  
Did raise by them  
A sceptre-bearing race of the monarchs  
And heroes, marvels of earth.  
Yet wonder, my child, no longer  
At my divinity ;

And, I pray thee, make me some tea with rum,  
For 'tis cold without,  
And in such a night air  
Freeze even we, we god-heads immortal ;  
And lightly we catch the divinest of colds,  
And with it a cough sempiternal.

---

## V.

The shafts of sunlight played  
Above the broad far-rolling sea ;  
Far in the roadstead glittered the sail  
Homeward to convey me destined ;  
But the breezes propitious were failing,  
And calmly I sat on the white sand-hills  
On the lonely shore.

And I read the song of Odysseus,  
The olden yet ever youthful song,  
From whose sea-murmuring leaves  
Rose gladsome before me  
The breath of the god-heads,  
And morns irradiate springtide,  
And the beaming heaven of Hellas.

My generous heart faithfully followed  
The son of Laertes in wandering and hardship,  
Near to him clung, saddened in spirit,  
By friendly hearths,  
Where were queens spinning their purple,  
And aided his wiles and happy escapes  
From giants' caverns and naiads' embraces,  
Followed him into Cimmerian night,

And in storm and shipwreck,  
And suffered with him ineffable anguish

Sighing, I spake : " Dire Poseidon,  
Thy wrath is terrible,  
And my heart trembles  
For my return."

Scarce the words had I uttered  
Than the sea foamed,  
And from the snowy waves arose  
The sedgy-diademed head of the sea-god,  
And, mocking, cried he :

" Little poet, fear thee not !  
I will endanger not one whit  
Thy poor barklet,  
Nor make thee anxious for thy dear life  
With over-hazardous rolling.  
For thou, little poet, hast angered me never,  
Thou never a single tower hast injured  
Of Priam's consecrate fortress,  
Never a single hair hast thou singed  
Of the eye of my son Polyphemus,  
And never hath thee with counsel preserved  
The goddess of wisdom, Pallas Athene."

Thus outspake Poseidon,  
And sank back again in the sea,

And o'er the rough seaman's jest  
Loud laughed under the waters  
Amphitrite, the blowzy fishwife,  
And the witless daughters of Nereus.

---

## VI.

Duskily rising, closed in the evening,  
    Wilder tossed the flood,  
And I sat on the shore and gazed upon  
    The snowy dance of the waves,  
And my bosom heaved like the sea,  
And yearning, there seized me a deep home-longing  
    Towards thee, thou dear image,  
That everywhere hovers around me,  
    And everywhere calls me,  
    Everywhere ! everywhere !  
In the sough of the wind, in the roar of the sea,  
    And the sighing of my own heart.

With slender reed I traced on the sand,  
    “ Agnes, I love thee ! ”  
But angry waves flung themselves  
    Over the sweet avowal  
    And blotted it out.

Fragile reed ! vanishing sand !  
Dissolving waves ! I trust ye no more.  
The heavens grow darker, my heart throbs fiercer,  
And, with mighty hand, from Norway's forests  
    I uproot the loftiest pine  
    And plunge it within



The glowing abyss of Etna, and with the same  
Fire-immersed Titanic pen  
I write upon the dark curtain of heaven,  
“ Agnes ! I love thee ! ”

Every night gloweth thereafter,  
High above, the flame-writ eternal,  
And all earth's generations succeeding  
Read, exulting, the heavenly letters,  
“ Agnes ! I love thee.”

---

## VII.

The sea hath its pearls,  
The stars gem the skies,  
But homed in my heart  
Love radiant lies.

Sea and sky boundless roll,  
But my heart vaster far,  
With its love brighter gleams  
Than the pearl or the star.

To this great heart of mine,  
Little maiden come nigh,  
For all melting with love  
Are my heart, sea, and sky.

\*

\*

\*

On the azure vault of heaven,  
Where the lovely stars are twinkling,  
Fain would I my lips be pressing,  
Pressing wild and weep impassioned.

Yonder stars above, the eyes are  
Of my darling, many twinkling  
Shimmer they and greet me kindly  
From the azure vault of heaven.

Towards the azure vault of heaven,  
Towards the eyes of the beloved one,  
Do I raise my arms devoutly,  
And I supplicate with weeping :

Kindly beaming eyes, grace-beacons !  
O'er my soul, oh ! shed your blessing,  
Let me die and win possession  
Of ye and your boundless heaven !

\* \* \* \*

From the eyes of heaven yonder,  
Tremulous sparks of gold are falling  
Through the night, and swells my spirit  
Wider yet with love and wider.

O ye eyes of heaven yonder !  
Weep yourselves upon my spirit,  
That with radiant starry tears  
May my soul be overflowing.

\* \* \* \*

Cradled by the ocean billows  
And by dreamy meditations,  
Lie I tranquil in my cabin,  
Nestled in my cot nook-hidden.

Through the open port behold I  
The far-distant stars refulgent,  
The belovéd eyes bewitching  
Of my sweet and much beloved one.

The belovéd eyes bewitching  
Keep their guardian watch above me,  
And they glimmer and they twinkle  
From the azure vault of heaven.

Towards the azure vault of heaven  
Do I gaze long happy hours,  
Till a veil-like cloud of silver  
Shrouds the eyes belovéd from me.

\* \* \* \*

Against the ship's planked side,  
Where lies my dreaming head,  
Are bursting the billows, the raging billows ;  
They ripple and murmur  
All soft in my ear :  
" Deluded mortal !

Thine arm is short, and the heavens are wide,  
And the stars above are firmly riveted

With golden nails,—

Fruitless yearning, sighs unavailing,  
"Twere better for thee didst thou slumber."

\* \* \* \*

I dreamed a vision of a spacious heath  
Far overspread with pure unruffled snow,  
And 'neath the spotless snow I buried lay,  
And slept the cold and lonely sleep of death.

But yonder gazed from out the sombre heaven  
Below upon my grave the starry eyes,  
The dear eyes ! and aye they gazed triumphant,  
Serenely bright and yet with love o'erflowing.

---

## VIII.

The storm is raging  
And lashes the billows,  
And the billows, chafing with fury and rearing,  
Tower on high, and quiver with life  
The snowy mountains of waters,  
And the barklet ascends them  
With toilsome eagerness,  
And headlong swift falls below  
In the gloomy, wide-yawning gulf of waters !

O sea !

Mother of beauty, of the Foam-risen,  
Love's mother's mother ! have pity on me !  
Already flutters, scenting the dead,  
The snow-white ghostly sea-mew,  
And whets its beak on the mast-head,  
And for the heart doth greedily crave  
That rings with thy daughter's renown,  
And which the sly urchin, thy grandchild,  
Hath chosen as toy.

In vain my prayers and tears !  
My cries are lost in the raging storm,  
In the tocsin of the wind ;

It roars and pipes and blusters and howls  
Like a madhouse of sounds !  
Between them fall on my ears  
Enchanting harp-tones,  
Strains of wild longing,  
Soul-dissolving and soul-subduing,  
And well the voice I recall.

Afar on Scotland's rock-bound coast,  
Where the gray fortress beetles  
Over the breaking sea,  
Yonder at the high-domed casement  
A fair wan woman stands,  
Of softest loveliness and marble pale ;  
And the harp she touches and sings,  
Her tresses lifted by the winnowing wind  
That bears her saddened song  
Over the wide tempestuous sea.

---

## IX.

Still is ocean ! Its resplendence  
Flings the sun upon the waters,  
And amid the surging jewels  
Furrows green the ship is cleaving.

By the steersman lies the boatswain  
Stretched at length and lightly snoring.  
By the mast, the sails repairing,  
Sitting is the tarry ship-boy.

'Neath the grime his cheek that covers  
Glow's a ruddiness, and sadly  
Quivers the broad mouth, and pensive  
The large lustrous eyes are gazing.

For the captain stands before him,  
Raves and swears and rates him: "Scoundrel,  
Scoundrel ! so thou hast a herring  
From the barrel stolen from me !"

Still is ocean ! From the billows  
Peers a wary fishlet upwards,  
In the sun his head while warming  
Merrily his tail he plashes.



But the sea-mew from the breezes  
Shoots upon the fish below her,  
And the sudden spoil her beak in  
Soars she up into the azure.

---

## X.

As I reclined by the ship's side,  
And gazed with dream-musing eyes  
Below in the mirror-clear waters,  
And gazed deeper and deeper  
    Into the depths of the ocean,—  
At first like vaporous haze,  
Then by degrees in colours more vivid,  
Domes of churches and towers appeared,  
And last, a whole city, clear as the sun,  
Of mediæval time, in the lowlands,  
    And thronged with men,  
Solemn figures in sable mantles,  
With snowy frills and chains of honour,  
And lengthy swords and long-drawn faces,  
Stalked the teeming market-place o'er  
To the lofty stair-flighted hall,  
Where marble forms of the Cæsars  
Kept stern watch with sceptre and sword.  
Not afar, by long rows of houses  
With mirror-lustrous casements,  
And the lindens clipped pyramidal,  
Wander maidens in rustling silk,

Graceful forms, the blooming faces  
With sable wimples modestly circled,  
Whence out-streams their golden hair.  
Gay gallants in Spanish garb,  
Stately, pass by saluting.

Venerable dames  
In brown outlandish dress,  
With hymn-book and rosary in hand,  
Hasten with tripping steps  
To the mighty minster,  
Sped by the chiming of bells  
And the organ's loud peal.

O'erwhelmed me at the distant sound  
Mysterious horror !  
Yearning unending, sadness profound  
Stole o'er my heart,  
My but newly-healed heart.  
Meseemed as though its every wound,  
Kissed open by beloved lips,  
Began to bleed again—  
Warm ruddy drops,  
That long and lingering fell  
Upon an ancient house below  
In the deep ocean city,  
Upon an ancient high-gabled house  
That sadly untenanted stands,

Save that at the low casement  
A maiden sits,  
Her head pillowed on her arm,  
Like some poor child forgotten—  
And I know thee, thou poor forgotten child!

Thus deep, and ocean deep,  
Hid'st thou thyself from me  
With childish caprice,  
And couldst no more ascend.  
And strange didst dwell amidst strange people  
Centuries long,  
The while that I with sorrowful soul  
Through the whole earth sought thee,  
And ever did seek thee,  
Thou ever-belovéd,  
Thou lost for long,  
Thou found at last.  
I have found thee, and see again  
Thy winsome face,  
The arch and faithful eyes,  
The darling smile;  
And never again will I quit thee more,  
And I hasten beneath unto thee,  
And with out-stretched arms  
I fling myself down on thy heart.

But in the nick of time  
The captain caught at my foot,  
From the ship's side drew me,  
And cried, angrily laughing,  
"Why, Doctor! are you mad?"

---

## XI.

Rest thee in thy depths of ocean,  
Delirious dream,  
That of yore so many a night  
With hollow delight my heart hath wrung,  
And now, an ocean spectre,  
Doth threaten me even in light of day—  
Rest thou for ever there below,  
And I will fling down unto thee  
All my sins and my sorrows,  
And the cap and bells of folly  
That long about my head hath tinkled,  
And the cold glistening serpent-skin,  
Dissimulation,  
That round my soul so long hath twined  
The sickly soul,  
The God-disowning, angel denying,  
Unhappy soul—  
Heigho! heigho! Now comes the wind!  
Up with the sails! They flap and swell!  
Over the silent, perilous plain,  
The vessel speeds,  
And the freed soul is exulting.

---

## XII.

High in the heavens stood the sun,  
    Begirt by fleecy clouds ;  
    The sea was calm,  
And pensive lay I by the ship's stern,  
Dreamily pensive,—and half in waking,  
Half in slumber, saw I Christ,  
The Saviour of the world.  
In long-flowing snowy robe  
Moved He in giant vastness  
    Over land and sea ;  
His head towered in the heavens,  
His hands He stretched in blessing  
    Over land and sea ;  
And for a heart in his bosom  
    Bore he the sun,  
The ruddy flaming sun :  
And the ruddy flaming sun-heart  
Poured its gracious beams  
And its sweet and love-blesséd light,  
    Radiant and glowing,  
    Over land and sea.

The chiming bells were solemnly drawing,  
Hither and thither, drawing like swans,  
By bands of roses, the gliding ship,

And drew it in frolic to the green shore,  
Where men were dwelling in the high-towered  
Beetling city.

Marvel of peace ! How calm the city !  
Stilled was the sullen murmur  
Of babbling feverish industry,  
And through the unsoiled echoing streets  
Men did move in raiment white,  
    With branches of palm,  
And wheresoe'er two did meet  
They glanced with intelligence each on the other,  
And trembling in love, and sweet resignation,  
Kissed each the other's forehead,  
    And gazed above  
Upon the sun-heart of the Saviour,  
Which in glad atonement its ruddy blood  
    Rayed forth below,  
And thrice blesséd, exclaimed they :  
“ Praised be Jesus Christ ! ”

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## Zweiter Cyclus.

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### I.

Thalatta ! Thalatta !

Hail unto thee, thou ocean eternal !

Hail unto thee ten thousand times

From jubilant hearts,

As once did hail thee

Ten thousand Grecian hearts,

Hardship-encountering, ever home-yearning,

World-renowned Grecian hearts.

The billows were heaving,

They heaved and they blustered,

The sun poured showering down

His frolicking rosy splendours,

The startled flight of sea-mews

Flitted across loud-screaming,

The chargers were pawing, the bucklers were ringing,

And afar echoed, like victory's shout,

Thalatta ! Thalatta !

Hail unto thee, thou ocean eternal !  
With voices of home thy waters are plashing,  
Like visions of childhood I see a resplendence  
Upon thy moving kingdom of waters,  
And olden memories newly are telling  
Of all the dear beautiful playthings,  
Of all the glittering Christmas gifts,  
Of all the ruddy coral branches,  
Goldfish, pearls, and many-hued shells  
That thou mysteriously dost treasure  
In yon clear hall of crystal below.

O ! how have I languished in lonely exile !  
Like to a faded flower  
In the botanist's leaden casket,  
My heart lay in my bosom.  
Meseems as had I through long winter lain  
A sufferer in a dark sick chamber,  
And now as suddenly quit it,  
And dazzling streams down upon me  
The emerald spring, the sunlight awakened,  
And the snowy blossoming trees are rustling,  
And the young flowers are gazing upon me  
With bright odoriferous eyes,  
All is fragrance, and humming and breathing and smiling,  
And in the blue heavens are singing the birds,  
Thalatta, Thalatta !

Thou hectoring, yielding heart !  
How oft, bitterly oft,  
Have pressed me sore the North's barbarian women !  
With full, all-conquering eyes  
Sped they their burning shafts ;  
With crafty, smooth-polished words  
Did they threaten to cleave my heart ;  
With arrow-cyphered bullets smote they deep  
My poor distracted brain ;  
In vain I brandished a covering shield,  
The arrows whistled, the blows did crash,  
And by the North's barbarian women  
Was I hurled back to the ocean—  
And freely breathing, I greeted the ocean,  
The dear delivering ocean,  
Thalatta, Thalatta !

---

II.

Heavily lay the tempest on ocean,  
And through the sable wall of cloud  
Darted the forkéd lightning flash,  
Swiftly up-gleaming, vanishing swiftly,  
Like sense from the head of Kronion.

Over the wide tumultuous waters,  
Afar the thunders are rolling,  
And leap the snow-white steeds of the waters,  
Bred by Boreas' self .....

From the beautiful mares of Ericthon,  
And uneasily flit by the sea-fowl  
Like shadowy corpses on Styx,  
Which Charon repels from his midnight' bark.

Hapless, blithe little bark,  
Dancing yonder the sorriest dance !  
Æolus sends it the nimblest companions,  
Who madly strike up for the frolicsome dance ;  
One doth pipe, another doth blow,  
A third scrapes the dull double bass,  
And the reeling sailor stands at the helm,  
And gazes steadily upon the compass,

The vibrating soul of the ship,  
And raises his hands beseechingly to heaven,  
"Oh, save me, Castor, horseman heroic,  
And thou knight of the fist, Polydeuces !

---

## III.

Hope and love ! Shattered together !

And I myself, like to a corpse  
Which the sea hath angrily upcast,  
I lie on the shore,  
On the lone desert shore.

Before me heaves the waste of waters,  
Behind me lies desolation and sorrow,  
And over me flit past the clouds,  
The shapeless sombre daughters of air,  
Who from the sea, in pails of cloud,  
Draw up the waters,  
Drawing and drawing them wearily ever,  
And pouring them into the ocean again,  
A mournful, wearisome task,  
And fruitless as this life of mine.  
The billows murmur, the sea-mews scream,  
Olden memories towards me are wafted,  
Dreams long-forgotten, visions gone by,  
Sweet in their anguish burst on my sight.

A lady dwells in the Northland,  
A beauteous lady queenly fair.  
The slender cypress form  
A radiant robe of white encircles ;  
The sable wreath of tresses,  
Like a happy night,

Streaming adown from the braid-crowned head  
    Circles dreamily sweet  
Around the sweet pale face,  
And from out the sweet pale face  
Full and resistless streams an eye  
    Like a sable sun.

O, thou sable sun, how oft,  
Bewitching oft, drank I from thee  
The maddening flames of rapture,  
And stood and reeled, fire-frenzied,—  
Then would hover a dove-soft smile  
Around the disdainful haughty lips;  
And the disdainful haughty lips  
Breathéd words soft as moonlight  
    And sweet as the scent of the rose,—  
    And my spirit ascended  
And soared like an eagle aloft in the heavens!

Peace, ye billows and sea-mews!  
Vanished is all. Hope and happiness,  
Hope and love! I lie on the earth,  
    A desolate, shipwrecked man,  
    And press my burning face  
    On the humid sand.

---

## IV.

The glorious sun  
Hath calmly sunk below in the sea ;  
The heaving waters already are tinted  
By the gloomy night,  
Save that eve's crimson flush  
Over it sheds its golden splendours ;  
And the roaring might of the flood  
Rolls to the shore the snowy waves  
That eager and frolicking skip  
Like flocks of fleecy lambs,  
Which at even the carolling shepherd-boy,  
Homeward doth drive.

“ How fair is the sun.”  
So spake, after long silence, the friend  
Who with me on the shore wandered,  
And jesting half, and half in sadness,  
Insisting, affirmed that was the sun  
A lovely woman\* whom had the old sea-god  
From expediency wedded.

By day above she wanders happy  
Through the high heavens, decked in purple,  
And blazing in diamonds,

---

\* The sun is feminine in German.



And all beloved and all admired  
Of all the creatures of earth,  
And all the creatures of earth delighting  
With her glance's lustre and warmth :  
But at even, disconsolate driven  
Back she turns her again  
To her humid home, to the dreary arms  
Of her hoary spouse.

“ Believe me,” added thereto my friend,  
And laughed and sighed and laughed again,  
“ They dwell down yonder in tenderest wedlock !  
Either they sleep or rail at each other,  
Till high here above the ocean is foaming,  
And the mariner hears midst the roar of the waves  
How the Ancient his wife upbraids :  
‘ Thou round jade of the universe !  
Lustre-coquetting !  
The live-long day thou glowest for others,  
And nightly for me art thou frosty and wearied ! ’  
After such curtain-lecture,  
Unfailingly bursteth out in tears  
The haughty sun, and moans her misery,  
And moans so piteously that the sea-god  
Sudden despairingly springs out of bed, .  
And swift to the sea's surface upward swims  
To recover his breath and his senses.

Even thus I beheld him on yesternight  
Rising from ocean as high as his breast,  
He carried a jacket of yellow flannel,  
    And a night-cap lily-white,  
    And a crestfallen visage.”

## V.

The grayness of even o'er ocean is stealing,  
And lonely, with none but his lonely soul,  
Sits there a man on the barren strand,  
And gazes with death-cold glance above  
Towards the out-spread death-cold vault of heaven,  
And looks on the wide tumultuous sea—  
And over the wide tumultuous sea  
Like airy ships his sighs are sailing,  
And turn back again, grief-smitten,  
And discover his heart close barred,  
Wherein they fain would anchor;  
And he groans so loud that the snowy sea-mews,  
Startled from out their sandy nests,  
Flutter around him in flocks;  
And to them he addresses these laughing words:

“ Sable-legged birds,  
With snowy pinions the sea o'erflitting,  
With curvéd bills sea-water up-sucking,  
And train-oily seal's flesh devouring,  
Your life is bitter e'en as your sustenance!  
But I, the happy one, taste naught but sweetness!  
I taste the sweet fragrance of the rose,  
The moonlight-nourished bride of the nightingale,  
I taste yet sweeter luscious confections

Filled with whipped cream to o'erflowing,  
And the sweetest of all do I taste,  
Sweet love, and the bliss of being loved.

“ She loves me, she loves me ! the gentle maiden !  
Now stands she at home in her cottage balcony,  
And peers in the gloaming without, on the highway,  
And listens, after me pining—yea, verily !  
In vain she gazes around and is sighing,  
And sighing trips she below to the garden,  
And wanders mid perfume and moonlight,  
And talks to the flowers, recounting to them  
How I, her belovéd, so loveable am,  
And so worthy of love—yea verily !  
At night on her couch, in slumber, in dreams,  
Around her flits happily my dear image ;  
In the morning, too, at her breakfast,  
On the glistening bread and butter  
She sees my countenance smiling,  
And she eats it all up for love—yea verily ! ”

Thus he vaunts and he vaunts,  
And, between, the sea-mews are screaming  
    With cold ironical titter.  
The hazy mists are upwards ascending ;  
Forth from the violet clouds all weirdly,  
Peeps without the grass-yellow moon,

Roaring loud are the ocean billows,  
And from the depths of the sounding sea,  
    Sadly as whispering breezes,  
    Floats the song of the Oceanides,  
The lovely, compassionate water-naiads ;  
Over all ringing the love-breathing music  
Of the silver-footed bride-goddess of Peleus,  
    And they sigh and they sing :

“ O fool, thou fool, thou blustering fool !  
    Thou grief-tormented !

All thy hopes are ruthlessly slaughtered,  
    The heart's rejoicing children.  
And ah ! thy heart, like unto Niobe,  
    Grief-turned to stone !

Within thy heart is the gloom of night,  
And through it there flashes the lightning of frenzy,  
    And of woe thou boastest !

O fool, thou fool, thou blustering fool !  
Headstrong as thine ancestor art thou,  
The lofty Titan, who heavenly fire  
Stole from the gods and gave unto men,  
And vulture-tormented, rock-enchained,  
Defied Olympus, defied it and groaned  
Till we could hear it in deepest Ocean,  
And to him hied with compassionate song  
O fool, thou fool, thou blustering fool !

Thou art even more impotent still ;  
And it were wiser thou honour'dst the gods  
And borest with patience the load of sorrow,  
And borest un murmuring longer and longer,  
Till Atlas' self his patience loses,  
And the weighty world from his shoulders flings  
In eternal night."

So rang the song of the Oceanides,  
The lovely, compassionate water-naiads,  
Till the louder waves did overpower it ;  
Behind the clouds withdrew the moon,  
The night deepened,  
And long I sat in the gloaming, weeping.

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## VI.

Full beaming moon ! Beneath thy light  
Like liquid gold doth gleam the sea ;  
As daylight's splendour witched into twilight,  
It lies on the broad expanse of shore ;  
And in the clear blue starless heaven  
    Hover the snowy clouds,  
Like to colossal imaged god-heads,  
    Of glistening marble.

No, never more ! these are no clouds !  
    They are themselves the gods of old Hellas,  
Who once so gladly the world did rule,  
    But now supplanted and lifeless,  
Like portentous spectres are driving  
    Over the midnight heaven.  
Wondering and strangely dazzled behold I  
    The gladsome Pantheon,  
The solemnly silent, fearfully moving  
    Figures Titanic.  
He, yon, is Kronion the monarch of heaven ;  
    Snow-white are the locks on his brow,  
The locks renownéd, Olympus convulsing ;  
    He holds in his hands the quenched lightnings,  
Upon his face lies dejection and grief,  
And yet still ever the olden pride.  
    Those were happier times, O Zeus,

When thou wert celestially joying  
Over youths and nymphs and over hecatombs !  
Yet even deities reign not for ever,

    The younger displace the elder.  
As thou once thyself thy hoary sire,  
And thy Titanic uncle supplanted,  
    Jupiter Parricida !

Thee know I also, haughty Juno !  
Despite thy ever-jealous disquiet,  
Another now the sceptre hath taken,  
And thou art no more the queen of heaven,  
And thy full-beaming eye is glazed,  
And are thy lily arms all powerless,  
And never more shall thy vengeance touch

    The god-espoused virgin,  
And the wonder-working son of the deity.  
Thee know I also, Pallas Athene !  
With shield and wisdom wert thou unable  
    To avert the deities' ruin.

Thee know I also—thee, too, Aphrodite !

    Once the golden, now the silvern !  
Though grace thee ever thy zone's love-witchery,  
    I secretly shudder before thy beauty ;  
And though rejoiced me thy beautiful form,  
Like other heroes, of dread should I die.  
A goddess of corpses thou art to me,

    Venus Libitina !



No more with love doth glance towards thee,  
Yonder the terrible Ares.  
Sadly appeareth Phœbus Apollo,  
The stripling. His lyre is silent,  
Which so joyously rang at the feast of the Gods.  
Sadder still looks Hephæstus,  
And truly the limper never again  
Fills he the office of Hebe,  
Nor pours busily in the assembly  
The exquisite nectar. And long is extinguished  
The inextinguishable laughter of gods.

I have loved thee never, ye deities !  
For the Greeks to me are repugnant,  
And the Romans to me are as hateful ;  
Yet holy pity and trembling compassion  
Streams through my heart  
When I behold you there above,  
Forsaken deities,  
Dead night-wandering shadows,  
Filmy cloud-drift that the wind doth scare,—  
And when I bethink me how tame and airy  
The deities are victorious over you,  
The modern, reigning, sorry deities,  
The plotters of mischief in sheepskins of meekness,  
O I am seized with a gloomy resentment,  
And I would destroy the modern temples

And fight for you, ye olden deities,  
For you and your good ambrosial right ;  
    And before your towering altars,  
Restored once again and smoking with victims,  
    I would myself fain kneel and pray,  
And raise my arms supplicating.—

For evermore, ye ancient deities,  
Have ye of yore in combats of mortals  
Taken ever the part of the victors,  
More magnanimous man is than you,  
And in the strife of the gods do I hold ever  
Firm to the side of the deities vanquished.

Thus I spake, and visibly reddened  
Above, the pallid cloud-woven figures,  
And gazed on me as the dying,  
Transfigured by sorrow, and suddenly vanished.

    The moon withdrew herself  
Veiled behind clouds that darkly sped onward ;  
    Loud the ocean roared,  
And out on the heavens victorious marched  
    The eternal stars.

---

## VII.

By the sea, the dreary night-shadowed sea,  
    Stands a manly youth ;  
His breast full of sadness, his heart full of doubtings,  
And with sullen lips he asks of the waves :

“ O solve me the riddle of life,  
    The woeful, primeval riddle,  
O'er which many heads already have pondered,  
Heads in heiroglyphical bonnets,  
Heads in turbans and black barettas,  
Heads in perukes and thousand other  
Hapless, labouring heads of men.  
Tell me what is it that man doth mean ?  
Whence doth he come ? Whither doth go ?  
Who dwells there above with the golden stars ? ”

The billows but murmur their murmur eternal,  
The wind but bloweth, the clouds drive onward,  
The stars ever twinkle, heedless and cold,  
    And a fool awaiteth the answer.

---

## VIII.

A bird comes from the westward flying,  
It flies towards the east ;  
Towards the garden home in the East,  
Where the spices are breathing and budding,  
And rustle the palms, and cool are the fountains,  
And flying, thus sings the wondrous bird :

“ She loves him ! She loves him !  
His image she bears in her little heart,  
And bears it sweetly, secretly hidden,  
Nor knows it herself !  
But in her dreaming stands he before her,  
She prays and she weeps and kisses his hand,  
And calls on his name,  
And calling she wakes and lies all startled,  
And wondering presses her beautiful eyes—  
She loves him, she loves him ! ”

Against the mast leaning, upon the high deck  
I stood and heard the song of the bird.  
Like dark green coursers with manes of silver  
Leaped up the snow-white curling waves :  
Like flocks of swans were gliding onward  
With glittering sails the men of Heligoland,  
The nomads bold of the North Sea.

Over me in eternal blue

Were hovering snowy clouds,  
And sparkled the sun everlasting,  
The rose of the heavens, glowing with fire,  
In the sea joyously mirrored ;—  
And ocean and sky and my own heart  
Resounded in echo :  
“ She loves him ! She loves him ! ”

## Epilogue.

As in the fields the blades of wheat,  
So shoot up and wave in the spirit of man  
His thoughts ;  
But the tender thoughts of love  
Are between them the gay-coloured blossoming  
Scarlet and blue flowers.

Scarlet and blue flowers !  
The early reaper rejects you as useless,  
Wooden flails thresh you out scornfully ;  
Even the needy wayfarer,  
Whom your sight delights and refreshes,  
Shakes his head  
And calls you beautiful weeds.

But the country maiden,  
The wreather of garlands,  
Honours and plucks you,  
And decks with you her beautiful tresses,  
And thus adorned hies to the green,  
Where pipes and fiddles sweetly are sounding,  
Or to the silent beech,  
Where the voice of the loved one lovelier sounds  
Than pipes or fiddles.

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## Letzte Gedichte und Gedanken.

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### I.

I thought of her the live-long day,  
And thought of her through half the night,  
And as I deep in slumber lay,  
A dream conveyed me to her light.

All blushing like a budding rose,  
She sitteth still in blissful calm,  
A frame doth on her lap repose,  
In which she works a snow-white lamb.

She glanceth softly, nor doth know  
Why thus I stand so sad to see :  
“ Why doth thy face such pallor show ?  
Say, Heinrich, who is grieving thee ? ”

She glanceth soft in wonder why  
    Into her eyes I weeping see :  
“ Why weepest thou so bitterly ?  
    Say, Heinrich, who is grieving thee ? ”

She gazes gently on me now,  
    While I scarce bear my agony :  
“ Who grieveth me, sweet love ? ’tis thou !  
    And ’tis my heart that aches in me.”

Then up she rose, her hand she laid  
    Demurely on my bosom—when  
At once my anguish all was stayed,  
    And joyous I awoke again.

---



## II.

In peace let us unite us  
    Ye little flowerets sweet,  
With laugh and chat delight us,  
    And blithe and joyous meet.

Thou maybell with thy whiteness,  
    Thou rose of blushing hue,  
Thou pink flecked o'er with brightness,  
    Forget-me-not of blue !

Come flowerets gay or lonely,  
    Ye all shall welcome be ;  
The mignonette shall only  
    Be friendly ne'er with me.

---

## III.

What wilt thou, sad sweet vision of my dreaming?  
I see thee and do feel thy breath's warm glow!  
Thou gazest on me with a desolate seeming;  
Thee know I, and, alas! thou me dost know.

A stricken man am I, my limbs now languish  
Lifeless, and my heart's fire flickers low,  
Enwrapped in gloom and bowed by cruel anguish;  
Far other when I met thee long ago.

In pride of strength and from my home far straying,  
I chased a long-dreamed wild ideal there;  
I sought the earth to crush in powder braying,  
And from the skies the very stars to tear.

Frankfort, that fosterest fools and knaves scarce wiser,  
I love thee; Germany is in thy debt  
For the best poet and many a right good Kaiser,  
And art the town where I the charmer met.

I strolled along the booths their fair fronts raising,  
'Twas market-time and folks all chaffering were,  
Bright was the swarming throng as I was gazing  
Dreamily on the crowd's busy stir.

There saw I *her*, and with a strange sweet wonder,  
I watched the lissom-gliding form and light,  
The heavenly eyes that beamed their soft brows under,  
How they did thrill me with a wondrous might !

And on through streets and market tripped she lightly,  
Unto a little lane's sequestered nook,  
There turned her the sweet child, and, smiling brightly,  
Vanished i' the house—and I her steps o'ertook.

By heaven ! in other maids as well as muses  
Am I well-versed, me no smooth face can snare ;  
Like hers, I trow, ne'er beat a heart's feigned ruses,  
And falsehood never can such glances wear.

And lovely ! lovelier ne'er did the unreal  
Goddess rising from the sea-foam seem ;  
Perchance was *she* the beautiful ideal  
That I had pictured in my boyish dream.

I knew it not, my senses undiscerning,  
For woven round me was a strange spell wrought,  
Perchance the bliss which I had long sought yearning  
My arm encircled—yet I knew it not.

But lovelier was she in her desolate sorrow  
When, after the third day that I had lain  
Dreamily lulled on her sweet breast, the morrow  
Impelled me on the olden chase again,

She with despairing gestures wilder growing,  
With hair dishevelled, her clasped hands did wring,  
And then upon the earth herself down throwing,  
And sobbing loudly, to my knees did cling.

Great heaven! About my very spurs entwining  
Her tresses caught—I saw the blood stream o'er—  
Yet tore myself away, for e'er resigning  
My poor child, and never saw her more.

Passed is the olden frenzy, yet, pursuing,  
The child's sad image haunts me where I go.  
Where strayest thou, in what cold desert rueing?  
To misery I gave thee, and to woe.

---

## IV.

The ocean waves gleam brightly  
Where the moon's rays are strewn,  
In a bark that dances lightly  
Two lovers sail alone.

"Thou art pale and paler growing,  
Thou heart's beloved of me."  
"Hark, sweet, to the splash of rowing,  
My father comes—'tis he!"

"Then must we swim, I fear me,  
Thou heart's beloved of me."  
"I hear him, love, rowing near me;  
I hear him raging at thee."

"Then bear thy head up higher,  
Thou heart's beloved of me."  
"O woe, love, the waters nigher  
In my ears come piercingly."

"Benumbed are now my feet, love,  
Thou heart's beloved of me."  
"Ah! death for ever sweet, love,  
Within thy arms must be."

---

V.

Eyes that I have long forgotten,  
Many a shaft their beam now lances,  
And again the spells bewitch me  
From the maiden's tender glances.

And her lips again recall me  
Bygone hours with their kisses,  
When all day I swam in folly,  
And all night dream-lulled in blisses.

---

## VI.

My pride doth prompt me that thou art  
Thy love for me concealing ;  
But whispers sager thought, 'tis all  
Thy nobleness of feeling.

That thou dost him to honour strive  
Whom all are lightly naming,  
That thou to me art doubly kind  
Whom others wrong, defaming.

Thou art so sweet, thou art so fair,  
Thy accents so do calm me,  
The words like liquid music breathe,  
And like the roses balmy.

Thou seemest like a lofty star,  
From heaven a welcome sending,  
Thou dost my night on earth illume,  
My woes a sweetness lending.

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VII.

Where doth fate the pilgrim straying  
 His last resting-place assign?  
 'Neath the southern palm-trees swaying?  
 'Neath the lindens by the Rhine?

Shall I in some waste sink dying,  
 Buried by a stranger's hand?  
 Or sleep on a far shore lying  
 Of some lone sea, in the sand?

Little reck I? Still before me,  
 There as here, shall spread the skies,  
 And like funeral torches o'er me  
 Shall the stars at night arise.

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## Anhang älterer Gedichte.

1816-1824.

## I.

Son of folly ! dream as ever  
When to thrill thy heart doth seem ;  
Yet in life, ah ! seek thou never,  
The ideal of thy dream.

Once when happier days were o'er me,  
On Rhine's loftiest peak I stood,  
Germany's fair land before me  
Lay by the bright sunlight wooed.

'Neath me were the waters weaving  
Melodies of softest spell,  
And sweet thoughts a rapture leaving  
In my heart caressing fell.

List I now to waters singing,  
But they weave another strain ;  
Long the sweet dream hath fled winging,  
The sweet spell long burst in twain.

Gazing from my lofty station  
On the lands that 'neath me sweep,  
See I but a pigmy nation  
O'er the graves of giants creep.

Idlers silken raiment wearing  
Call themselves the nation's vaunt,  
Knaves are stars of honour wearing,  
Hirelings as nobles flaunt.

Now the German garb doth find us  
Aping but our father's ways,  
'Tis the faded coats remind us  
Sadly of the olden days :

When good manners, pious reverence,  
Went all simply hand in hand ;  
When youth with a modest deference,  
Bashful before age would stand ;

When no youth a maiden courted  
With the gallantries in mode ;  
When no despots' wit imported  
Perjury reduced to code ;

When a hand-shake more than swearing,  
Or a law-deed, could assure ;  
When each man was armour wearing  
And a heart within him bore.

In our gardens still are gleaming  
Thousand flowers rare and bright,  
Sprung from soil with blessings teeming,  
Bathing in the soft sun-light.

But of all, the flower delighting,  
In our gardens ne'er doth blow,  
Which in olden time, inviting,  
On the very rocks did grow ;

Which on each cold craggy tower,  
By the mailed hands of men,  
Cherished was as fairest flower,  
Hospitality called then.

Wend thy steps, ah ! pilgrim weary,  
To yon lofty castle ne'er,  
For no warm bright room, but dreary  
Cold walls shall receive thee there.

From his tower no warder shrilly  
Blows, no drawbridge falls below.  
Lord and warder slumber stilly  
In the cold grave long ago.

In their gloomy coffins sleeping  
Lie, too, beauteous dames of old,  
For such shrines are treasures keeping  
Richer far than pearls and gold.

There the breeze's tremulous wreathing,  
As with minstrel music blows,  
For love in pure accents breathing  
From those holy ruins rose.

Our dames esteem I truly,  
Who are blooming as the May;  
They, too, love and practise duly  
Painting, dance, embroidery.

Sweetest strains they carol weaving,  
Of the lore and truth of yore,  
But in secret scarce believing  
In the truth those legends bore.

Knew our mothers once, as knoweth  
But a simple faith like theirs,  
That the fairest gem that gloweth  
Man within his bosom wears.

In the fashion keeping nearly  
Their wise daughters follow them,  
For in our days women dearly  
Love they, too, the glittering gem.

Superstition fraud and lying  
    Govern. Life no charms doth home ;  
Jordan's matchless pearls belying  
    The imperial pride of Rome.

Dreams of happier hours ! breaking,  
    Haste back in your gloom to fly,  
Vain laments no more awaking  
    Of the days that us deny.

---

## II.

Thou who art so pure, so fair,  
Love-sweet maid beyond compare,  
In thy service might I dare  
A life devote, how sweet it were!

Glance thy lovely eyes whene'er  
'Tis as moonlight in the air;  
And their rosy lights declare  
Two soft cheeks, a blushing pair.

And thy little mouth doth bear  
What do seem strung pearls and rare,  
But a fairer jewel ne'er  
Than thy heart doth bosom wear.

Love which but the pure may share  
Did within my heart repair,  
As on thine first gazed I there,  
Love-sweet maid beyond compare.

## III.

Lone, must I, my sorrows waking,  
In the lap of night complain ;  
Merry comrades all forsaking,  
Timorous flee, where joy doth reign.

Silent are my tears flowing,  
Streaming ever, streaming still,  
But my heart's sighs fiercely glowing,  
Quench them, aye, no tears will.

Once a merry boy and laughing,  
Played I many a sportive game,  
Life's gift with each breath inquaffing,  
And knew naught of sorrow's name.

Seemed the world a garden blending  
Hues of every flower that blows,  
And my day-work flowers tending,  
Jessamine, violet, and rose.

In green meads when pensive dreaming  
Saw I flowing streamlets clear ;  
Now I gaze—their waters gleaming,  
Mirror a wan image here.

Gloom is on my spirit weighing  
    Since on *her* my eyes first fell,  
Secret pangs are on me preying,  
    Wrought o'er me a wondrous spell.

In my heart long held I clinging,  
    Angels of calm peace and love,  
These have trembling soared up-winged  
    To their starry home above.

Shades of night mine eyes are veiling,  
    Angry shapes rise boding ill ;  
And within my heart low wailing,  
    Murmurs a strange voice and still.

Anguish strange and a strange yearning  
    Rise in me with fiercest throes,  
And within my bosom burning  
    A strange wasting fire glows.

But that in my heart untiring  
    Ceaseless flames devour me now,  
That I sink from love expiring—  
    Love, behold ! this doest thou.

---



## IV.

Each lad with his arm in his lass's entwined,  
Strolls 'neath the lindens by ;  
While, lack-a-day ! with fortune unkind,  
All lonely ramble I.

My heart is straitened, mine eye is sad  
When two happy lovers I see ;  
For a sweet love I, too, once had,  
But she dwells afar from me.

This many a year ne'er a murmur I make,  
But can bear no more the pain,  
And my knapsack will tie and my staff will take,  
And roam through the world again.

And will ramble on through the circling hours  
Till I come to the mighty town  
Which gleams with its three stately towers  
By a river's mouth adown.

There soon will vanish all love's care,  
There joys my coming greet ;  
Love's arm in mine, I'll wander where  
O'er-shade the lindens sweet.

---

## V.

When I anear my true love be,  
    Then leaps my heart with pride ;  
Then rich in soul, I 'd barter free  
    The world and all beside.

But when doth come the parting day,  
    From her fair arms to speed,  
My wealth all vanishes away  
    And I am poor indeed.

---

## VI.

In my father's garden hidden grows  
A floweret drooping and wan;  
When the winter passed and the spring arose,  
The pale flower still drooped on.  
The floweret pale doth show  
Like a sad bride of woe.

The floweret pale to me soft spake,  
"Dear brother, pluck thou me."  
To the flower I whispered : "Nay, for thy sake,  
Ne'er, ne'er can I pluck thee ;  
I seek with toil and care  
The crimson flower fair."

The pale flower said : "Seek far, seek near,  
Till thee cold death shall snare,  
Thou seek'st in vain, ne'er bloometh here  
The crimson flower fair;  
But do thou pluck me now,  
For I am wan as thou."

Thus murmured the flower and sore did plead,  
Till I plucked it away outright,  
And straight my heart did cease to bleed,  
And all was within me bright.  
And in my wounded breast  
Angelic peace doth rest.

---

## VII.

Where the stars shed rays illuming,  
Joys await us ever blooming,  
    Held from us on earth who stay ;  
In death's cold embraces lying  
Shall life wake to warmth undying,  
    And night fade in endless day.

---

## VIII.

Lonely in the forest chapel,  
'Neath the image of the Virgin,  
Lay a pale youth, with devotion  
Low and reverently bending.

“ O Madonna ! here for ever  
Let me kneel upon this threshold,  
Do thou never hence repel me  
To the world so cold and sinful.

“ O Madonna ! fall in sunlight  
From thy brow thy radiant tresses,  
Sweetest smiles are gently playing  
Round thy mouth's celestial roses.

“ O Madonna ! thine eyes to me  
Lighten like the starry splendours ;  
Life's frail bark doth drifting wander,  
And the stars do guide securely.

“ O Madonna ! without faltering  
I have borne thy sorrow trial,  
To a pure love blindly faithful,  
Only in thy ardours glowing.

“ O Madonna ! to-day hear me,  
Full of grace and rich in wonders,  
Grant me but a sign of favour,  
But a slender sign of favour.”

Then was accomplished an awe-filling wonder,  
Parted the walls and the chapel asunder ;  
The youth himself what had happened scarce knew,  
For straight all around him was changed to his view.

Amazed in a bright hall he stood, to his seeming,  
There sat a Madonna but rayless nor beaming,  
Transformed to a beautiful maid in her place,  
Who greeted him smiling with childish grace.

And lo ! from her fair head dividing  
Herself a lovely tress, confiding  
In heavenly tones the youth she addressed :  
“ This take for thy earthly meed and best.”

Say, what seals this consecration ?  
Saw'st thou not the colours floating  
Midst the skies in corruscation,  
Iris' bow to men denoting ?

Angels up and down are wending  
Upon rustling pinions winging ;  
Wondrous strains are softly blending,  
And sweet harmonies are ringing.

Knows the youth the glow that feeding  
His heart's quest with sweet endeavour,  
Onward to that land is leading  
Where the myrtle blooms for ever.

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## IX.

To the moth its mother's care  
Warned it, " Fear the candle's flare."  
But to what its mother said  
Little heed the young moth paid.

Round the light quick doth it come,  
Flying with a whirring hum ;  
Nor its mother's cry doth hear,  
" Little moth, beware, beware ! "

Youthful blood, fiery blood  
Plunges in the burning flood,  
In the flame to leap doth dare ;  
" Little moth, beware ! beware."

Flashes now its fiery breath,  
Flame hath brought consuming death.  
" Have a heed of maidens fair,  
Little son, beware, beware ! "

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## X.

The day was sultry, my heart a-glow,  
And ever with me I bore my woe ;  
Forth I sped when fell night's gloom  
To a sheltered spot where the roses bloom.

As hushed and lightly I drew me near,  
Adown my cheeks coursed many a tear ;  
In the chalice rose as I glanced mine eyes  
A radiant lustre seemed to rise.

And gladsome 'neath a rose-bush I slept,  
A mocking dream o'er my senses swept ;  
A rosy-hued maiden I beheld  
Whose bosom a crimson bodice veiled.

She gave me rich treasures, a golden store,  
Which straight to a golden mansion I bore,  
And in this mansion a bright young crew  
Of elves in merry dance round flew.

There danced twelve dancers without stay or rest,  
And each the hand of the other pressed ;  
And when one dance to its close had run,  
Away quick another had straight begun.

To my ears the music these accents bore :  
“ The sunniest hours return no more,  
The span of thy life but a vision deem,  
And even this hour a dream in a dream.”

The dream was done and the morn grew gray,  
And my eye quick glanced to the rose as it lay.  
O woe ! where the radiant glow had been,  
Was an insect cold in its chalice seen.

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## XI.

Falsehood are thy kisses weaving  
    But their guile is bliss believed ;  
O how sweet is the deceiving !  
    Sweeter still to be deceived !

Love, though coy thyself thou bearest,  
    Know I what thou grantest still ;  
I'll believe whate'er thou swearest,  
    And will swear to what thou will.

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